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The Black Populations of the Sudan
Mossi and Gourounsi Country
(Le Noir du Soudan
Pays Mossi et Gourounsi)

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[Title page]

/451/ Book Four

Black Warriors and Conquerors

Chapter I

The Mossi -- Occupations

101 The Mossi are settled between the twelfth and fourteenth degrees
131 of north latitude, and between the second and fifth degrees of west longitude. To the south, they extend slightly beyond the twelfth degree of latitude. They are indeed to be found in Saraboutenga, Rakaye, Béré, and Tenkodogo, but this does not bring them too fár south of the twelfth degree. To the north, on the other hand, they do not quite reach the fourteenth degree.

161 The Mossi form a rather large group which occupies, in the center of the area, the circle /an administrative division/ of
563 Ouagadougou; to the northwest, the circle of Ouahigouya; to the southeast, the residency /administrative center/ of Tenkodogo; and to the east of the latter, the circle of Fada N'Gourma. Of course, the Mossi do not make up the total population of these four districts. In the Ouahigouya circle, there are the Habé /Habe/ and Houmbébé /Humbe/ to the northwest, and the Samoro /Samo/ to the south. In the Ouagadougou circle, which may be regarded as the center of Mossi territory, there are the Kipirsi to the east. In the Tenkodogo residency there are the Boussansé /Busansi/ to the south and in the circle of Fada N'Gourma the Gourmantché or Gourmanké /Gurma/ to the east. The Mossi, however, make up
161 the /452/ greater part of the total population in all four areas. In the circle of Ouagadougou, they number 750,000, in the residency of Tenkodogo, 122,000, in the residency of Leo, 1,000. This adds up to 873,000 for the circle of Ouagadougou as a whole. Assuming that there are 200,000 Mossi in the circles of Ouahigouya and Fada N'Gourma (a very approximate figure), a total of 1,073,000 Mossi is obtained. This makes them by far the most numerous group in all of French West Africa. The whole of our Dahomey, for example,

161 has but 655,000 inhabitants, while our French Guinea has 1,400,000, the Yolof /Wolof/ group of the Senegal numbers only 400,000, etc.

144 At present the Mossi are a completely homogeneous group in terms of custom and language, but this homogeneity is a mere end result. The Mossi population of today derives from the fusion of a conquering group (the Mossi proper) with a conquered group that was probably related closely to the Habé, Kipirsi, Gourounsi /Grunshi/, Boussansé, etc.

173 Lieutenant Marc, who lived for many years among the Mossi and who published a book /Le pays Mossi (Mossi Country)/ on the region in 1909, which I have already mentioned /in section not translated/, has the following to say on the subject:

"Local traditions claim that the Mossi come from far to the east. A long time ago, they occupied a territory located beyond the Niger, whose capital was called Aliaman. It is said that this land is now occupied by a Songhay /Songhai/ population. Then the Mossi came and occupied Dagomba /Tamale/. They defeated the inhabitants of that land, and the chief of the Mossi settled in Gambaga. The daughter of the king of Gambaga, Ouidiraogo ("male horse" in Mossi), had an affair in the bush with a Dagomba elephant hunter called Samba. She became pregnant, and as her father wanted to have her put to death, she took refuge in Tenkodogo. There she married the king of the land, a Boussangçé named Zoungourouma, who waged war on his father-in-law and conquered the entire region from Gambaga to Koupéla. Zoungourouma had three sons, Séré, Oubri, and Kouda. The first became naba of Boussouma. The second, Naba Oubri, conquered the region of Ouagadougou, built his capital there, and seized the Yatenga territory. Naba Oubri is regarded by the /453/ Mossi as the first Moro Naba and the founder of the present dynasty. He was succeeded by his brother Couda, and then by his son Nigamenda. The Mossi trace back to Naba Oubri the present organization of Mossi country and attribute to him the division of the land into fiefs governed by his brothers and relatives. At present members of the royal families of Ouagadougou, Boussouma, Tenkodogo, Fada N'Gourma, and Gambaga are regarded as direct descendants of Naba Oubri and his brothers.

173 "The Mossi say that at the time of their arrival the land was occupied by savages who went naked and bore tattooings on their bellies. Those natives were named Suida. The Mossi claim that they chased the Habé into the mountains of Bandiagara and that the Habé, Kipirsi, and Boussangçé are the survivors of this autochtonous Suida group . . . .

"The traditions of the primitive groups driven off by the invaders agree rather closely with Mossi traditions. . . .

174 "In view of these traditions, it seems to us,¹ that the Mossi, coming from far to the east, occupied those lands which are now Mampoursi /Mamprusi/ and Dagomba territories, with Gambaga as their capital, and then, from Gambaga, set out for the northwest and came to settle in the vast plains of the White Volta basin, where they still live. At the time of their arrival, the present Mossi country was inhabited by tribes which are now represented by the Boussangçé, the Gourounsi, and the Habé.

"It is probable that the Mossi owed part of their success to their cavalry. We believe that the Mossi were responsible for introducing the types of horses found at the present day in the Volta basin. Even today, all the Mossi love horses and are proud to own them, and no naba would deign to appear in public except on horseback. The Gourounsi, on the other hand, care little for horses. . . .

"Only part of the autochtonous inhabitants took refuge in the mountains or beyond the Red Volta. The remaining group was conquered and incorporated into the Mossi group, and adopted the Mossi language and customs /454/. This autochtonous population did not vanish without traces. In our opinion, it is to be credited with the religious organization of the Mossi." (Pages 130 to 134.)

173 Moulins, on the other hand, an official in charge of native affairs who lived among the Mossi from 1907 to 1909 and who wrote the Monographie /Monograph/ of the Ouagadougou circle in 1909, tells the story as follows:

"Tradition has it that some thirty-five generations ago, the king of Dagomba who lived in Gambakha had a daughter named Poko whom he allowed to grow in years and in beauty without attempting to find her a husband. This made the young girl so angry that she did not hesitate to run away from her paternal home on a horse she had found.

[1] [These passages are quoted from "Le Pays Mossi" of Lt. Marc, see p 2 —Analyst]

173 "She reached the area of present-day Yanga (Tenkodogo district), which was then occupied by a sparse group of Boussansé, and fell in love with an elephant hunter named Riare, by whom she had a son called Ouidiraogo (possibly in memory of the house on which Poko had fled Gambakha, for ouidiraogo means "male horse").

"When Ouidiraogo was about fifteen years old, Poko sent a messenger to Gambakha with the mission of telling the king of the Dagomba, "You did not want to give me in marriage, but God gave me a son whom I beg you to help." Then she sent Ouidiraogo to his grandfather, and the latter welcomed him and presented him with four horses and fifty head of cattle.

"At that time, the kingdom of the Dagomba was overpopulated. When Ouidiraogo returned to the Tenkodogo area, therefore, a large number of Dagomba threw in their lot with him and followed him. With this group, he founded a village which he named Tankourou on a site the Boussansé had abandoned when they saw him coming. This is present-day Tenkodogo.

"From that time onward, Ouidiraogo's power grew with the endless stream of Dagomba who came and gathered under his rule. The neighboring populations, on the other hand, were quite sparse and highly divided, and he was able to impose his authority upon them.

/455/ "Meanwhile, Ouidirago had married and given birth to numerous sons. When his boys grew up, he installed them as chiefs in the neighboring areas, especially in Fada N'Gourma, forcing his will by strength of arms upon those who were unwilling to submit.

"The area forming the present-day district of Ouagadougou was occupied at the time by Nymsi /Nioniosse/ and Gourounsi who lived side by side in a state of complete anarchy. The various villages acknowledged to a greater or lesser extent the authority of their chief, but although they were sometimes federated into cantons of a sort, they did not submit to any central power. As a result, incessant warfare and pillage prevailed among the villages.

"The chief of a group of Nymsi or Nioniossé which consisted of seven villages, the approximate equivalent of the present canton of Oubrytenga, dispatched a delegation to Ouidiraogo offering him one of his daughters in marriage. Ouidiraogo accepted the offer and gave the girl to his son Zoungourana, who had by her a child named Oubry.

"A few years later a new delegation of Nioniossé came to greet Ouidiraogo and to ask him to take their country under his protection by placing it under the command of one of his sons. Ouidiraogo set out to the land of the Nioniossé to take possession of it, but in the course of this reconnaissance he died in the village of Saraboutenga. His son Zoungourana succeeded him and dispatched Oubry, who was about twelve years old at the time, to assume command of the Nioniossé. Oubry settled with his retinue in a village that took the name of Oubrytenga.

"During the initial years of his reign, on account of his youth, Oubry merely governed the region which had called upon him as its ruler. When he reached manhood, however, he prepared to extend the boundaries of his rule.

"A first detachment, sent to Gangado and Loumbila-Poko, procured the submission of the Boussouma and Béloussa regions. A second expedition, conducted to La, established Oubry's sovereignty in the Yako area.

/456/ "At that time, Zoungourana died. Oubry was his legitimate heir. Under the name of Moro Naba, he thus became chief of the Mossi and head of all branches of the reigning family. He left the administration of the Tenkodogo region to one of his brothers, but retained over it rights of suzerainty which subsisted until the time of the French occupation.

"Oubry's final expedition was aimed at Ouagadougou, where he waged a battle that lasted for five days. As a result, his authority was acknowledged as far as the Kipirsi. The Mossi empire was now established.

"Oubry died soon afterwards at Koudougou (Kipirsi) in the course of a journey through his new lands.

"When he died, not only had the conquest been carried out, but the political organization of the territory had already been firmly outlined. In order to facilitate the administration of his vast empire, Oubry had divided it into provinces, which were in turn subdivided into cantons, each of which contained a number of villages. A strong hierarchy prevailed among the various chiefs and converged on the Moro Naba, who thus centralized a considerable amount of power.

173 "This does not mean that nothing remained to be done by Oubry's successors. The land had been conquered, but remained to be explored and incorporated. The political organization had been outlined, but remained to be strengthened and completed.

"Up to the reign of Naba Kobra, fourteenth successor of Oubry, the Moro Nabas settled successively at various points of the empire instead of living generation after generation at Ouagadougou as they have done ever since. It would seem that in so doing they were attempting to strengthen their authority in regions where it was as yet insufficiently acknowledged.

"Whenever a territorial command became vacant, on the other hand, the Moro Nabas systematically filled it with a member of their own family. As a result, the whole land was soon in the hands of individuals who were united by bonds /457/ of kinship and who acknowledged the Moro Naba as the head of their family.

"Finally, thanks to marriages between Mossi, Nymsi, and Gourounsi individuals, the conquering element fused slowly with the initial population and eventually absorbed it almost completely.

174 144 "We[1] have already seen that at the time of the Dagomba invasion the territory that makes up the present district of Tenkodogo was inhabited by a Boussansé population, while the area covered by the present district of Ouagadougou was settled by Gourounsi and Nymsi or Nioniossé.

"The mixture of Dagomba with Boussansé, Nymsi and Gourounsi resulted in the Mossi element, which soon became the most important part of the population. As conquerors, indeed, the Dagomba married several women each, and the prohibitions governing kin marriages led them to seek their wives among the Boussansé, Nioniossé, and Gourounsi families. This is how they soon came to absorb the Autochtonous element, or at least the element that was already established in the area when they arrived.

"A few Nymsi families among the Mossi have avoided all intermixture, but their continuous contact with the Mossi has led them to adopt the latter's language and customs, and from a political standpoint there is no difference between the two groups."

174 From the two accounts of Marc and Moulins, the following broad facts may be gathered:

1. The Mossi, coming from the northwest, conquered the Dagomba at a time which is difficult to determine exactly, but which must not have long antedated their conquest of Mossi territory.

[1] [Passages quoted from the "Monograph of the Ouagadougou circle in 1909" by Moulins.—Analyst.]

174 2. They set out from Dagomba to conquer the present Mossi territory, beginning with Tenkodogo and ending with Ouahigouya, that is, proceeding from southeast to northwest. Moulins' account is preferable to Marc's, as concerns the details of this conquest, for the items are better documented, more credible, and more accurate (for example, /458/ Marc says that Ouidiraogo was the daughter of the king of Dagomba. Yet Ouidiraogo means "male horse" in Mossi, and consequently could not be a girl's name, while Poko is a female name common among the Mossi, and in fact simply means "woman." Likewise, if Marc's account were to be taken literally Zougourana would be a Boussansé, while he is a Mossi, father of Oubry the conqueror, etc.).

3. They found there an autochtonous group closely related to the Kipirsi, Gourounsi, Habé, and Boussansé of today, and they mixed with it. From previous study we are already familiar with the Gourounsi, who are communal cultivators. The Kipirsi, Boussansé, and Habé are of similar social type. It was the conquering Mossi who injected into the resulting mixture a superior, decommunalizing element.

Something must now be added to Moulins' account. He seems to believe that the Mossi reached their greatest conquering expansion in Oubry's reign, and that once they had seized the present Mossi territory, from the time of Oubry onward, they concerned themselves merely with the administration and consolidation of the lands they had conquered. This, however, does not agree with the account of the Tarikh-es-Soudan /History of the Sudan/ from which Marc borrowed so fruitfully.

The Tarikh tells us that the Mossi seized Timbuktu in the fourteenth century, and Marc, very logically it seems sets the seizure of Timbuktu around 1333 or 1334 (for a discussion of this topic see pages 136-138 of his book, mentioned above). In 1336 or 1337, however, Mali forces re-occupied Timbuktu. The Mossi, therefore, reached much farther north than Moulins indicates right from their first conquering thrust. The reign of Oubry, conqueror of Ouagadougou, may be set in the twelfth century A.D. His successors continued the drive toward the northwest. They occupied Ouahigouya, drove back the Habé just beyond the village, and pushed on toward the river /Niger/ to attack Timbuktu for the first time in 1333 or 1334. They seized the town, but Mansa Sliman, 174 chief of the Mali empire, recaptured it a few years later.

/459/ Mossi expansion toward the south may no doubt be set at that time. This expansion is a fact. We have already verified, in mentioning the Dagari, that an important Mossi group came and settled in Dagari country, fusing with the autochtonous inhabitants and forming the present-day Dagari who speak a language derived from Mossi and very closely related to it. The Dagari live in the extreme south of the Leo district and in the north of the British Gold Coast. In other words they are settled, as we already know, on the tenth and eleventh parallels.

Marc, incidentally, acknowledges the fact that the Mossi went as far as the ninth degree south. "In the east," he says on page 138, "they occupied all of Gourma /Gurma/ territory and, to the southeast of Dori, Yaga territory. To the south, in the valley of the White Volta, they pushed on to the ninth parallel, and in the valley of the Black Volta they reached the tenth parallel near Oua. These southern boundaries are roughly the extreme frontiers which may be reached on horseback, and since the Mossi, as we have already mentioned, are basically horsemen, it is probable that they did not attempt to come any closer to the great forest."

Marc sets the conquering Mossi thrust toward the east (Gourma, Yanga, etc.) and toward the south (Nounouma /Nunuma/, Sissala /Isala/, Dagari, Kassouna /Kasena/, Boura /Builsa/, etc.) in the fifteenth century. I myself would rather place it in the second half of the fourteenth century, for at the time when the Mossi seized Timbuktu (1333 or 1334) they were certainly propelled by a powerful drive of conquest and expansion. Yet we know that Mansa Sliman, sultan of the Mali empire, recaptured Timbuktu a few years later. This of course could not be done without pushing back the Mossi toward the southeast, toward Ouahigouya or Ouagadougou, but it is most likely that this temporary setback did not stem their expanding drive. Rather, it would be logical and consistent with the broad trends of history to assume that it was merely deflected in another direction. It was no doubt shortly after the recapture of Timbuktu by the Mandé, therefore, that the Mossi turned south and pushed on as conquerors to Oua. It is probable that the whole second half of the fourteenth century, as well as the first few years of the fifteenth, were given to this task.

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/460/ This Mossi expansion toward the south served, incidentally, to swell the forces of the empire. It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find the Mossi heading north again at a later time. The Tarikh-es-Soudan relates that in 1432 and 1480 they led victorious expeditions against Timbuktu and successfully attacked the Macina.

In my opinion, it was at that time, toward the middle of the fifteenth century, that the Mossi empire reached its zenith. It ruled over the whole bend of the Niger, from Oua and Gambakha /sic/ in the south to near Timbuktu in the north, and roughly from the eastern to the western Niger /River/.

This position of dominance, however, was soon to be lost. In 1483, the Mossi invaded territories which the founder of the second Songhay empire had just won from the Mali empire. The forces of the latter advanced on the Mossi, inflicted upon them a bloody defeat, and pursued them right into their own territory.

In 1497, Askia El-Hadj-Mohammed unleashed the holy war against the Mossi. In 1549 and 1561, Askia Daoud made brilliant forays into Mossi territory. In short, the second Songhay empire took the upper hand, checked Mossi attacks to the north, and went so far as to pursue them into their own lands. It was at that time, no doubt, that the Mossi were forced to abandon permanently those territories located beyond Ouahigouya, both to the northwest and to the north. It was probably at that time also that the Mossi wave which had advanced toward the south drew back within its present boundaries, abandoning the Dagari and Gourounsi lands, etc., although not without leaving some traces.

In 1591, a Moroccan detachment brought the second Songhay empire to an end and captured Timbuktu. Now the Mossi had nothing to fear from the north, since their great enemy, the Songhay empire, had been destroyed, while the Moroccan empire of Timbuktu was soon to decay. Nevertheless, the Mossi had suffered too many reverses in the sixteenth century to recover from the blows inflicted by the Songhay, and they too were well on their way to decadence. It was at that time, no doubt, that the Ouahigouya Mossi broke all the bonds that tied them to Ouagadougou. /461/ The Gourma region probably did the same. In short, in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Mossi empire shrank to the dimensions it possessed when we conquered it in 1896.

174 It must be said, however, as Marc points out, that the Mossi empire enjoyed a peaceful old age in the nineteenth century. The Toucouleur /Tukulor/ who conquered the Haoussa /Hausa/ territory with Othman /Usuman/ dan Fodio did not touch Mossi lands, and neither did El-Hadj-Omar who was detained in Macina territory by the Foulah /Fulani/. Toward the south, Samory went no farther than Boromo after conquering the Sudanese Ivory Coast. As for the forces of Djerma or Zaberma /Zerma/, they suffered a defeat in Kipirsi lands after their conquest of Gourounsi territories, that checked temporarily their march toward the north. They might later have nibbled at Mossi lands, but the French arrived precisely at that time. In short, the Mossi empire remained intact throughout the nineteenth century, though none the stronger for it, and crumbled at one blow in 1896 at the hand of a small French detachment.

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174 We must add to this brief historical outline a list of the Moro Nabas who have succeeded one another since the time of Oubry. This list was borrowed from Moulins' Monographie du cercle de Ouagadougou /Monograph of the Ouagadougou Circle/.

1. Oubry, son of Zoungourana, grandson of Ouidiraogo, great-grandson of Poko. He lived at Oubrytenga.
2. Sorba, son of Oubry, who lived at Lougousi.
3. Nassekiemdé, brother of Sorba.
4. Nassébiri, brother of Sorba. He lived at La.
5. Ningnom, brother of the preceding.
6. Koundoumié, son of the preceding. He lived at Tiou.
7. Kouda, son of the preceding. He lived at Saponé.
8. Dawoéma, son of the preceding. He lived at Loumbila.
9. Zettembousma, brother of the preceding.
10. Nandieffo, son of the preceding. He lived at Ouagadougou.

If the reign of Naba Oubry is set around 1175 A.D., a period of 721 years is obtained up to the time of Bokary Koutou, thirtieth Moro Naba, who ruled in 1896. This yields an average reign of 24 years for each Moro Naba. If these figures are applied to the first ten Moro Nabas, it means that Kida would have reigned from 1463 /462/ to 1487. He would have been the one to invade the second Songhay empire in 1483 and to be driven back by Sonni-Ali.

173 11. Nattia, son of the preceding. He lived at Dazouli.
174 12. Namoëro, son of the preceding.
13. Kida, brother of Nattia. He lived at Ouagadougou.
14. Kimba, brother of the preceding. He lived at the same place.
15. Kobra, son of the preceding. He lived at Uougandé.
16. Sana, son of the preceding. He lived at Ouagadougou, where all his successors resided up to the present day.
17. Guiliga, son of the preceding.
18. Oubia, brother of the preceding.
19. Mottaba, son of the preceding.
20. Ouarga, brother of the preceding.
21. Zombéré, son of the preceding.
22. Kom, son of the preceding.
23. Sagha, son of the preceding.
24. Koulougou, son of the preceding.
25. Savadoro, son of the preceding.
26. Karfo, son of Savadoro.
27. Baoro, brother of Savadoro.
28. Koutou, son of the preceding.
29. Sanom, son of Koutou.
30. Boukary /sic/ Koutou, son of Koutou.

It was Bokary Koutou who was dethroned by Lt. Voulet in 1896.

31. Kouka (Siguiri) with whom Lt. Voulet signed a treaty whereby Mossi territory was placed under the suzerainty of France
32. Kom, the present Moro Naba (1910).

648 As may be seen, therefore, the Moro Nabas continue to exist among the Mossi. France even provides them with a pension, which first amounted to 25,000 francs a year and has since been lowered to 18,000 francs. They no longer hold any powers, however, and they do nothing whatever.

175 I have found in the Monographie of the circle some interesting data on expeditions led by the Moro Nabas into Kipirsi territory, which always resisted Mossi conquest. Naba Koundoumié, sixth successor of Oubry, /463/ first led a bloody expedition to Kayao and Tiou. Naba Dawoéma, eighth successor of Oubry, waged war to the north of Yako. Naba Ouarga, twentieth successor of Oubry, settled

175 at La and waged a series of battles in the Yako region. Naba Koutou, twenty-eighth successor of Oubry, fought in the Sourgou region (Kipirsi). And finally, during the last few years preceding our occupation, Naba Sanom and Bokary Koutou attacked the village of Lallé.

643 631 According to Moulins' data, it was Naba Koundoumié, sixth successor of Oubry, who set three of his sons as heads of the Boussouma, Béloussa and Yako provinces. He made them veritable monarchs who were united to the Moro Naba by a mere bond of vassalage, as was already the case with the chief of Tenkodogo.

Moulins adds, "As a rule, the chiefs of vassal provinces do not seem to have given much thought to enfranchisement from the Moro Naba's suzerainty, which actually did not weigh heavily upon them. We must come all the way to modern times, to Sanom's reign, to find signs of a struggle between the sovereign and the chiefs of Boussouma and Béloussa.

"On the other hand, the important vassals sometimes resorted to the Moro Naba's support to strengthen their authority within their own provinces. We have just mentioned the expeditions directed against Yako. Tradition has also preserved the memory of a series of battles waged by Dawoéma, eighth successor of Oubry, against the Boussansé of Garango who attempted to free themselves from Tenkodogo Naba."

174 Following this brief glance at the history of the Mossi empire, there remain, or should remain, three questions to investigate.

1. The remote origins of the Mossi proper, the conquering Mossi who came from Dagomba to Tenkodogo and then to Ouagadougou. At the present day, however, these origins are unknown. They might be uncovered by studying the Mossi language and comparing it systematically with the ancient or present tongues of north, east, and west Africa. I do not believe that such a piece of research is forthcoming, however. /464/ The Mossi might also be studied from the standpoint of physical anthropology, in which case two distinct studies ought to be made, one of the chiefs and nobles, another of the bulk of the Mossi population. The results would then be compared with those obtained for other populations of north and west Africa. Like the one previously mentioned, however, this would be a tremendous project which is not likely to be undertaken in the near future.

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802 In connection with this problem, I shall enumerate below the digits from one to ten in Mossi, in closely related languages (Dagomba, Nankana /Nankanse/), and in derivative tongues (Dagari, Boura, Gourma).

	Mossi	Dagomba	Nankana	Dagari	Boura	Gourma
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Un . .	Yémeri	N'Dan	Yendé	Yen	Gni	Iendi
Deux .	Yibou	Niyi	Yi	Ayi	Niyé	Lié
Trois .	Tabo	Nta	Ntan	Ata	Ngata	Ita
Quatre	Nasé	Nahé	Anasé	Ana	Anasi	Ina
Cinq .	Nou	Anou	Anou	Anou	Nganou	Imou
Six . .	Ayobé	Ayobo	Ayobé	Ayobe	Vendenta	Ilouoba
Sept .	Yopoï	Ayopoué	Ayopoué	Ayopoué	Nantanasé	Illélé
Huit .	Ani	Ani	Ani	Ani	Nané (ou Nani)	Ni
Neuf .	Aoué	Aoué	Aoué	Voué	Noo	Ia
Dix . .	Piga	Pia	Pia	Pié	Pi	Piga

174 2. The second question is *a priori* less difficult to solve. It concerns the time when the Yarsé or Ouangarbé settled in Mossi territory.

Marc and Moulins do not agree on this score.

Speaking of Mossi territory, Marc says (*op. cit.*, p. 142), "It was most probably its reputation as a peaceful land that lured the Mandé-Dioula /Diula/ or present-day Yarsé about the middle of the eighteenth century. According to the native traditions summarized by Binger, some Mandé-Dioula who were established in Ségou and who had taken a stand against N'Golo, victor over Sogoné, fled in fear of retaliation after the death of Sogoné in 1754 and came to settle among the Mossi. N1Golo attempted to pursue them, and twice came and attacked the Mossi. Both expeditions failed, and N'Golo died in the course of the second one in 1787."

/465/ According to Marc, the Yarsé would thus be Mandé-Dyoula /sic/ from Ségou who settled in Mossi territory in the eighteenth century. Moulins has quite a different idea.

174 "The Yarsé or Ouangarbé," he says in the Monographie of the Ouagadougou circle, "entered the territory during the reign of Koundoumié, sixth Moro Naba.

"At that time, as tradition has it, seven Mandé traders named respectively Bolle, Rambéré, Séré, Pallom, Morebanom, Parirabo, and Mari Konda, were traveling through Mossi territory with their merchandise. They called upon the Moro Naba, and the latter, impressed by their intelligence, conceived the thought of keeping those superior individuals in his own employ. He plied them with gifts, offered them wives, and installed them nearby in a quarter that was given the name of Zoroné. According to this account, the descendants of these men gave rise to the various Yarsé communities which are found today throughout the circle."

According to Moulins, therefore, the Yarsé would have entered Mossi territory toward the end of the thirteenth century or the beginning of the fourteenth, since Naba Koundoumié's time may be set around 1300. I believe that this opinion is more accurate than Marc's, in view of the fact that the Yarsé no longer know the Mandé language and speak only Mossi. It would be surprising if these Mandé had come to forget their mother tongue within a century and a half, although this might occur in five centuries. Nevertheless, one detail disturbs me in the Moulins version: the seven Mandé traders bear Mossi names, Bolle, Rambéré, Pallom, etc., instead of Mandé names as would be natural. No matter what the truth may be, it is more probable that the Yarsé settled in Mossi territory during the thirteenth or fourteenth century A.D. than in the eighteenth century.

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563 3. The same problem of a date of settlement applies to the Foulbé /Fulani/, and there again Marc and Moulins are in complete disagreement.

"The Peul probably came to Mossi territory in the footsteps of the Mandé-Dioula," says Marc, page 143. Moulins has a different opinion. /466/ "The Peuhl, he says, "must have settled in the Mossi area at a very remote time. It even seems that they had long been there at the time of the Dagomba invasion." This would take us beyond the twelfth century A.D. In any case, it is probable that the Foulbé were established in Mossi territory in small groups, as they are still today, well before the eighteenth century.

144 This is all we shall say by way of introduction to our study of Mossi customs. The main point to be remembered is that the bulk of the present Mossi population is not of "pure" origin, but results from a mixture between the Mossi conquerors and antecedent primitive groups.

000 Let us now turn our attention to work, and first of all to cultivation. We shall study the various types of labor in greater detail than we did so far in relation to the populations previously studied, and the reader will get a better idea of the work performed by the Blacks in these regions.

243 Millet is the most important item of cultivation among the Mossi, who call it ki. They cultivate various kinds of millet, and we shall take them up one by one.

First of all, the ordinary small millet, which is most widely cultivated. It is the Bambara sanio or Mossi kasui. It requires good black soil with low sand content.

243 242 Let us make the general statement that the Mossi, whenever they can, change plots every four years. That is, they clear a new field or take over an old one which has lain fallow. If they have little land, they cultivate the same plot indefinitely. In other words, they may till the same field for some twenty years.

243 When a new plot is cleared, the clearing is done in March or April. The head of the soukala goes to work with all his men. Daba /hoe/ and hatchets are used to cut down the trees. The women come along, but only to serve drink to the men, because they do not take part in the clearing.

[461 512] The workers go into the bush in the morning and remain there all day. They rest around the middle of the day (from noon to /467/ two or three o'clock), and then take up their work again until sundown. The women return home first to prepare dinner, and then the men follow. After the clearing proper has been completed, all that was torn up from the ground is gathered in a heap and set afire. The ashes are left on the soil to fertilize it. It should be noted that the roots of the trees are not removed. The trees, in fact, are merely cut about one meter from the ground, so that the field is dotted with stumps. Sometimes, instead of cutting down a tree, a small fire of branches and dry leaves is lit at its base and the

243 tree set to fire. It burns slowly, and only a slight effort is needed to cut it or topple it down.

[423] When plots are being cleared, useful trees such as karité /shea butter/ or néré /locust bean/ are spared. They remain in the field and revert to the man who is doing the clearing, the owner of the plot.

One awaits the rains before sowing, but one does not sow when the first rains fall in April. It is only in May, when the rains are frequent and the storms heavy, that the sowing is done.

A previously cultivated field is merely cleaned before sowing. While only men, as we have already seen, may clear a new plot, Mossi women as well as men share in the cleaning of a field that was cultivated on preceding years, *and in the sowing as well.*

The sowing is done as follows: The koutiaga (a kind of daba) is held in the left hand, while a small gourd containing millet is held in the right hand. The man or woman, squatting, makes a hole with the koutiaga with the left hand, and drops the millet into the hole with the right hand. Then some earth is replaced with the left hand.

Now the millet is allowed to grow. When it has emerged from the ground and shot about 20 centimeters, people go with the ouaka (another kind of daba) to remove the weeds growing among the millet shoots. In some areas everyone cleans up, men, women, and children. In other areas, as a rule, it is the men who carry out this task, /468/ but when they are too few the women help out. The weeding is done every morning.

Among the Mossi fields are cleaned three times between sowing and harvesting. We have already seen that the Gourounsi only do this twice.

When the millet has grown tall and the birds might peck at it, the women and children are sent to the fields to frighten the birds away.

243
343 The small millet is harvested around mid-November. When it is ripe, the stalks, 2 or 3 meters high, are cut down. They are laid upon the ground, and the heads are cut with a knife. The heads might be likened to the tip of those water reeds which bear a kind of brown velvety stem, some 30 centimeters long, rounded and about the thickness of two fingers. Once the heads have been cut off, they

243 343 are tied, placed in baskets, and carried to special huts. These are small straw huts built on stakes, that is, raised on thick pieces of wood, which stand in a long curved line by the fields. About twenty such huts often stand side by side. Both men and women share in the harvesting.

243 Whenever the millet is to be eaten, the heads are taken from these straw huts and threshed with a stick to set the grain loose. This threshing is done by the men.

Aside from the ordinary small millet, it is the large red millet
that is grown most extensively, as a rule, among the Mossi. They
[147] call it *kaziéra* or *kaziéga* (we know that the *r* and *g* are interchangeable in Mossi; people will say, for example, either *nora* or *noga* to mean "chicken") and the Bambara call it *niooulé*. The large red millet is the kind used chiefly for *dolo*.

This is the millet that is planted before any other, as soon as the first rains begin to fall. The *ouaka* is used to remove the weeds which have grown in the fields, then the weeds are burned and the large red millet is sowed at the time of the first storms (April). It is sowed in the same fashion as the small millet, by holding the *koutiaga* in one hand and the small gourd containing grain in the other.

When the millet has come out of the ground, a fortnight /469/ is allowed to elapse and then the weeds are cleared with the *ouaka*. When the millet is grown, the women and children are sent out to protect it against birds. The millet is ripe around September 1.

The bulk of the harvesting work is done by the men. The stalks, which are usually 3 meters high and which may even reach 4 are cut down at the base. Once they have been dug out and laid down, the heads, which are thick and tuftlike with red flowers, are cut with a knife and carried to the *soukala*. The women do the carrying as they do for other kinds of millet. The large red millet is threshed only as it is needed. The threshing is done by the men with a stick.

Let us note that when a new piece of land is cleared, the large red millet is sown first to find out if the soil is good. It is only in the following year, when this has been ascertained, that the small millet is sown.

The red millet is also cultivated around the *soukala*, like maize.

[273] As a rule the Mossi use the large red millet only to make *dolo*
231 262 (*dama* in Mossi). They may also give it to horses, but some horses

231 will not take it. The Mossi only eat it themselves if there is no
262 other kind of millet available, or in times of famine. In any case,
[751] the red millet has a constipating effect, and when people suffer
from colic they are given a to /mush/ of red millet to check the
attack.

243 The Mossi also grow the ordinary large white millet, which is the kind grown most extensively, aside from sanio, throughout the Sudan. The Mossi call it baninga, the Bambara kéningué or guessékélé. It is called kéningué around Ségou, and guessékélé around Nioro. The Nounouma call it nienso, and so do the Kassonfra /Awuna/. The Kassonboura /Kasena/ call it béninga, that is to say, they have adopted the Mossi word and slightly altered it. (We saw, in fact, that some Kassouna-Boura, at least those of Po and Tiahané, are Kassouna-Mossi rather than Kassouna-Boura.)

Europeans often give this kind of millet the name of "pearly millet" /mil nacré/ or "horse millet," because it is tender and easy to crush.

/470/ This millet is not grown by every Mossi. Those who do
[231] grow the large white millet eat it themselves. They also give it to
their horses. It is cultivated exactly in the same fashion as the small
millet, that is to say, it is sown and harvested at the same time.

The Mossi also grow the kipéléro or kipélégo (from ki, "millet," and péléro or pélégo, "white"). This is the yaro or yara of the Gourounsi, and probably the n'guéné or n'kendé of the Bambara and Malinké, a kind of millet intermediate between the small and large white varieties. Actually, one of my informants told me that the kipéléro is sown along with the ordinary small millet, that no distinction is made between the two, and that they are used for the same purposes, while another informant maintained that it is a kind of large white millet.

The Mossi also grow some gadiaba. This is a kind of large millet which is either white or red. The Bambara call it gadiabadié when it is white, hamadiboubou when it is red. The Mossi refer to the gadiabadié as noira. They cultivate it only in Boussouma province. As for hamadiboubou, it is not to be found among the Mossi.

As far as the early millet /mil précoce/ is concerned, the Mossi are familiar with it and call it nado, but they do not cultivate it. This is the souna of the Bambara, the tiara of the Nounouma and

243 Kassouna. We have already seen that the Kassonboura once grew it extensively. The Boussansé also cultivate it.

On the other hand, the Mossi grow a little sweet millet (or tiokandé). They call it mobinoro. This is the sampa of the Bambara, the gamba of the Kassonboura. The Mossi, like the Kassonboura and Bambara, sow this millet in small quantities in the maize fields that surround the soukala. The Nounouma, Kassonfra, and Sissala do not cultivate it.

222 Aside from cultivated millet, the Mossi are familiar with the bakat or wild millet, also called "bird's millet." They call it nadanga. This is the bouaboua of the Bambara, the mintoro of the Kassouna. Among the Mossi, in times of famine, the women go and cut it down, lay it in the sun to dry and crush it, for it contains a small edible grain. There is little to be found in Gourounga territory, although some of it does grow by the watercourses /marigots/ and could be utilized in times of famine.

243 /471/ Aside from millet, the food crop most extensively cultivated by the Mossi is maize, which they call kamana. Maize is grown around the soukala itself rather than in the bush. It is sown at the beginning of the rainy season. First the soil is turned up with the ouaka, and then holes are made with a koutiaga or hatchet. Two or three grains of maize are placed in each hole, and then covered up. Once this has been done the millet is allowed to grow, and when the stalk has come out of the ground the weeds are cleared with the ouaka. After this it takes two months and ten days for the maize to ripen. It is harvested in August, first among the grains. The stalks are dug out or cut down with a daba, or else they are simply broken by hand.

Once the stalks have been laid down, the ears are cut off. They are left to dry in the sun on the roofs, where they are suspended in [251] clusters. Then they are stored in the grain hut, from which they are removed when the kernels are to be made into flour.

252 It often happens that instead of being left to dry, the ears of maize are eaten green, roasted on the embers.

After the maize has been stored and allowed to dry, the women pound the kernels into flour. This flour is placed in boiling water to make soft cakes which are eaten immediately.

243 Maize, let us point out, is one of those crops that are harvested early. The Mossi, and as we know all black populations of West

243 Africa as well, have two harvests, one in August and the other in November-December. The latter is by far the more important, but in order to prevent famine while waiting for it, these peoples also have early, quick-growing crops that yield from the second half of July, in August primarily, up to the middle of September. Among these crops, the most important may well be the maize sown in April and harvested in August, but there are others, such as the early millet mentioned above and also the large red millet. The most important crops (small millet, large white millet), on the other hand, are sown in May or earlier, or sometimes not until July, and harvested in November and December.

/472/ The Mossi also grow a little rice (*moï* in Mossi). The kind they cultivate is water rice /*riz d'eau*/. It is sown along watercourses and ponds. This is the most difficult crop to cultivate, according to the old men.

At the present day poor people grow a little rice. In former [554] times they did not grow it at all, and chiefs alone cultivated it. Even now, it is largely grown by chiefs.

Rice is sown in May after millet. The field is worked with a special *daba*, the *souga*, which is used to turn up the soil. Little holes are made with a *koutiaga*, and from seven to ten grains of rice are placed in each hole and covered with a little soil. Then, the rice is left to grow. It comes out of the ground at the end of seventeen days. During the rainy season, the waters of the watercourse or pond cover the small rice field. Weeds are removed, inside the water, with the *ouaka*. The harvesting is done during the second half of October, before the small millet and large white millet are gathered. The rice stalks are cut down with a kind of scythe and spread upon the ground to dry in the sun. Then, both men and women thresh it with sticks. Sometimes the stalks are taken into the *soukala* instead, left to dry for three days in the courtyard, and then threshed. [251] The straw is discarded. When there is only a little rice, it is kept in a *canari*. When there is a lot, it is stored in baskets which in turn are placed in little straw huts raised on stakes.

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252 The Mossi, who in short grow very little rice, claim that they prefer millet to rice. Millet, they say, provides more energy. Rice is eaten boiled, with meat if possible, and the whole thing is served with peanut or *gombo* /Tr. okra/ sauce.

244 The Mossi grow considerable quantities of peanuts (nangouri in Mossi, n'tiga in Bambara, gherté in Peuhl and Toucouleur).

No earth mounds are made for the cultivation of peanuts among the Mossi. The peanuts are sown five or six days after the millet. Holes are made with a koutiaga, one or two peanuts are placed in each hole and then covered up. When the shoots appear, the weeds are removed with the ouaka. When the peanuts are ripe (end of October), the pods are dug up with the ouaka. /473/ They are left 251 to dry in the sun for three or four days, and then they are taken to the village in baskets. Again the peanuts are left to dry on the clay roofs of the huts, and then placed in the little straw huts already mentioned from which they are removed only to be eaten. The 252 peanuts are roasted. They are also used, although not very often, to prepare sauces eaten with millet.

231 The greens of the plant do not go to waste. They are gathered and given to horses, and make excellent fodder for them.

In addition to peanuts, the Mossi grow considerable quantities 244 of underground peas. Not everyone grows them, however. The underground peas are sown after all the other grains and tubercles.

The grass is cut on the spot where the peas are to be grown, but it is left there to serve as fertilizer. Then, holes are made into the ground with the koutiaga, and the sowing is done. When the plant begins to shoot, the weeds are pulled out by hand rather than with the ouaka, since the latter would remove everything. The underground peas ripen in three months. They are gathered at the same time as the peanuts, that is to say, in October. The peas are dug 251 out of the soil with the ouaka. They are cleaned, left to dry, placed 252 in baskets, and carried to the little straw huts. They are eaten boiled.

244 The Mossi also grow sesame, which they call sili. They cultivate it in small bush plots. Sesame is sown at the height of the winter season, three months after the first rains. The soil is scraped with the ouaka, and the grains carried in a little gourd are spread upon the ground. The sesame emerges from the ground ten days later. Men, women, and children pull out the weeds by hand. The harvesting is done when the stalks have reached 1.50 meters in height (immediately following the harvest of the small millet). The stalks are severed at mid-height with a knife and then laid out on

244 mats in the sun to dry. Finally, the sesame seeds are beaten loose with a piece of wood.

252 The Mossi ordinarily use these seeds in the sauce. The women crush them on a stone, boil them, and add salt and soumbara /néré seeds/. This sauce is eaten with millet, /474/ maize, etc. Sometimes the fresh seeds are also eaten after roasting on the fire.

244 The Mossi also grow some beans (benna or binga in Mossi, soso in Mandé, niébé in Peuhl). They do not cultivate them in separate plots, but sow them in the millet fields along with the millet. The stalks creep along the ground. The beans are ripe before the millet.

It is the women and children, equipped with baskets, who do the harvesting (November). Then the pods are laid out on the ground and threshed by the men with sticks. The beans are picked [252] and placed in the straw huts. To eat them, one simply boils them and adds salt.

The Mossi grow some sweet potatoes (nanioua in Mossi, nanioura [184] in Nounouma). The Mossi who live around Ouagadougou do not grow any. Those who live around Kombisiguiri grow some. A few Tenkodogo Mossi also cultivate them. The potatoes are planted along the watercourses around July 15, that is to say, at the height of the rainy season. Small earth mounds are built, with holes at the top. Potato slices are placed in these holes and covered with earth. When the sowing is done, the work is over. No attempt is made to pull out the weeds. The harvesting is done at the end of three months, consequently around October 15. The potatoes are dug out [252] with the ouaka, carried to the huts, and eaten boiled in water.

The Mossi grow some ozonifie /a potato-like plant/ (pèsa in Mossi, kayya in Nounouma and Kassouna, fabirama in Mandé) around the soukala or in the bush. They build small earth mounds with the ouaka, then make holes in these mounds with the koutiaga, and place one tubercle in each hole. They cover up the holes and spread the ground with fertilizer consisting of straw and grass, refuse taken from the soukala or gathered around it. The harvesting is done in November. At that time, the ozonifie are dug out with the ouaka. [252] They are placed in a canari pending their consumption. They are eaten boiled.

244 All Mossi grow ozonifie. They like it, but do not cultivate it in large quantities. It has to be planted in damp places. Some people plant it in the bush, others in the villages, but always near a spot where there is water.

/475/ The Mossi hardly grow any yams (nioua or niouya in
[184] Mossi, pia in Nounouma, kou in Mandé). The southern Mossi alone
cultivate it, and very little at that, in Kombisiguiri for example.

Here yams are sown in November along watercourses. Earth mounds 50 centimeters high and correspondingly wide are built with the ouaka. Then holes are made with a stick at the top of these little pyramids. Yam slices are cut, buried in these holes, and covered with earth. Then a prop is driven into the ground. The stem of the yam plant emerges from the ground and climbs along the prop. Seven months are required for the root, the yam itself, to reach its proper thickness and ripeness. During the month of April, therefore, a certain number of yams are dug out of the ground with the ouaka. The greatest number are left there, however, the soil is replaced, and the major harvest, the total harvest, is only taken in November, that is to say, a year after sowing.

[252] To eat yams, one cuts them into pieces and boils them in water.

As for manioc (boumboro in Nounouma), it was unknown to the
[177] Mossi until the arrival of the French. The latter brought a few stalks,
but the natives do not cultivate it as yet.

As far as diabéré is concerned (kousoubadé in Mossi, diabéré in Mandé), the Mossi grow a little of it. It is sown at the time of the first rains in the fields of maize or large red millet, that is to say, around the soukala. Holes are made with the koutiaga, and small tubercles are placed within them. The plant is harvested one month after maize, that is, in September.

In Mossi territory, it is cultivated chiefly by the Yarsé, for example those of Rakaye and Saraboutenga.

The Mossi themselves cultivate it little, and the same applies to the Bambara. The Gourounsi and Boussansé do not grow it at all.

[252] The diabéré is cooked in water, peeled, and eaten as it is.

According to Guebhardt (Au Gouta-Djallon /In the Fouta Djallon/, 1910), the diabéré (the Poullo /Fulani/ name) is really taro (Caladium antiquorum or esculentum).

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/476/ André Rançon (Dans la Haute-Gambie /In the Upper Gambia/ 1895) describes it in detail as follows:

"The Bambara and Sarracolé /Soninke/ call it diabéré, the Malinké diabéro, and the Peuhl oussoudié. It is a magnificent aroid of the Arum genus. It grows chiefly in damp places sheltered from the sun, and it favors soil which is rich in humus. This is why the lougan /frameworks/ for diabéré are always located in the shade of large trees where the ground is cooler, sheltered from the sun, and richer in humus because of the mold formed by the rotting leaves. It is a hardy plant, and its underground stem consists of a tubercle. The leaves have long petioles and may be as high as 2 meters. They are strongly ensheathed at the base, peltate, and the broad part of the leaf is sometimes of enormous size. They exhibit at the lower edge a rather deep indentation which runs up to a few centimeters from the spot where the stem radiates into three main nerves. These three are larger than the others and easy to recognize for they are quite obvious. From them radiate secondary nerves which also stand out strongly.

"These leaves are very thick. The three main nerves are never absent. The secondary nerves vary in number according to the age of the plant, and especially the size of the leaves. The secondary nerves radiate in turn into a large number of filaments which are quite easy to recognize and which crisscross the parenchyma of the leaf and reach the edges almost in a straight line. The upper face of the leaf is of a vivid dark green and somewhat velvety. Finally, the petioles are greenish brown at the base and a tender green at the top.

"The flowers are unisexual, clustered on a single spadix, with the females at the base and the males above, and without a perianth. They are surrounded by a spathe which is rather closed, rolled up like a horn, and of a slightly yellowish white. The fruit is a globular berry, unilocular, and containing from two to eight /477/ seeds. I dedicate this new plant to Professor Heckel and name it Arum heckeli.

"The root is a tubercle, about the thickness of a fist, blackish brown, and somewhat like a slightly elongated onion in shape. When the plant ripens, about twelve or fifteen turions grow on this tubercle, the largest of them the size of an egg at most. They make up the edible part, which is also used for reproduction. Their shape is the

244 same as that of the tubercle, to which they adhere strongly. Their
137 color is also the same. The flesh of these turions is white, highly aqueous, and compact. It recalls that of the potato, or rather that of the sweet potato. The odor is slightly noxious.

"The diabéré are sown in June and July. It is sufficient to
244 place the turions in a hole dug into the ground to a depth of 10 or 15 centimeters. The harvesting is done in December. Around the end of October or beginning of November, the inhabitants of the Sandougou (Upper Gambia) are in the habit of cutting the leaves to a height of about 10 centimeters from the ground, in order to make the turions grow bigger.

252 "The diabéré is not a vegetable to be scorned even by the delicate palate of the Europeans. When boiled or fried in the pan, it makes a dish of pleasant taste. I recall eating it with pleasure in a mutton stew. The natives prefer it boiled, and in certain areas, for example the Diaka, Sandougou, and Tenda, they eat it in large quantities. In the latter region especially it is consumed
[164] intensively, and the natives of neighboring territories attribute the skin disease and numerous goiters of the Tenda inhabitants to their over-indulgence in this food." (Pages 83 to 85.)

246 The Mossi also cultivate karyanga or kamyanga. "This gramineous plant," says the Cahier des rapports /Production Report) of the Ouagadougou circle, "grows wild along watercourses, but the natives also cultivate it around the edges of their millet fields. The stalk, hairy and rough, reaches a /478/ height of 0.80 meter when full grown. It expands into a sheaf near the tip. The leaves, about 3 centimeters wide, are shaped like very elongated spearheads. When still green, they are severed about 20 centimeters from the ground. Then they are left to dry in the sun and stored for consumption during the dry season. The karyanga serves as fodder for livestock and horses. This plant is quite widespread in the eastern and southeastern parts of Mossi territory (Béloussa and Tenkodogo)."

As we can see, karyanga is a grass that grows in the bush along watercourses and that is cut down and fed to horses. Some horse owners cut it down and replant it in their maize field. In the

246 following year seeds fall to the ground and the grass grows back once more. It is cut down, but not at ground level, so that it will perpetuate itself.

The Gourounsi call it keulo. They merely cut it down in the bush, and do not replant it among the maize. It grows in sufficient quantities in the open bush of Gourounsi territory, which is more extensive than that of Mossi country, to preclude the need of replanting.

244 The Mossi cultivate gombo (mana in Mossi, pora in Nounouma and Kassouna, gouan in Mandé). Every Mossi grows some for the sauce.

They sow it during the damp season at the same time as the millet, in small separate plots. They turn up the soil a little with the ouaka, make holes with the koutiaga, put in gombo seeds, and cover up the holes. One allows the plant to grow, digs out the weeds with the ouaka, and then waits for two months. At that time the enormous gombo stalk, which is even higher and sturdier than maize, has grown out and borne its greenish, slightly elongated and ribbed pods. Then, the ripest pods are gathered and cut up for the sauce. The harvesting is done gradually, from September 15 until the end of December.

252 To prepare gombo, one cuts the pods into pieces and leaves them to dry. When some gombo is needed, these pieces are crushed /479/ and reduced to a sort of powder which is boiled in water. The fresh gombo pods may also be utilized. They are cut into pieces and boiled in the same fashion. Salt and soumbara are added. This makes a sort of paste, greenish and sticky, which is highly prized by the natives.

244 We stated above that the Mossi grow gombo in small isolated plots along the watercourses. This does happen, but often, like other Blacks, they merely sow a few stalks of gombo among their maize.

438 The gombo is sold in dried pieces at Mossi markets.

252 Let us add that gombo leaves, when tender, are also used in sauce.

244 The Mossi also grow sorrel.

They have two kinds, the dakissé sorrel and the dangono sorrel. These are Bambara names. In Mossi, dakissé is called bi and dangono is called ouéréda.

The Mossi plant bi around the millet fields at the same time as millet, at the beginning of the winter season. Holes are made with a koutiaga for the seeds, which are put in by hand and covered with earth. Then the plants are allowed to grow. After three months, the sorrel is ripe. The leaves are then removed to be used in the sauce, and the stalk is cut at mid-height to get the seeds, which are also used in the sauce.

[71] Like the Bambara, the Mossi sometimes plant both kinds of sorrel in the peanut and underground pea lougan, and sow them along with these plants when the first rains begin to fall. The sorrel is gathered eight days after the peanuts and underground peas.

252 The Mossi cook dakissé seeds in a canari full of water. Then they remove the jar from the fire and top it with another one that covers the mouth of the first jar completely. This is allowed to sit for four or five days, and then the dakissé seeds are removed and ground in a small mortar to make flour.

Then the ashes of burnt wood are placed with water in a perforated gourd that serves as a filter. /480/ The ashes are filtrated into a canari that stands underneath. They are then mixed with dakissé flour and transferred to a canari that is left covered for five or six days. When these are over, the mixture is cooked for the last time. It is placed in a gourd that is perforated and that sits on a canari full of water. The water is heated, and the vapor comes in through the small holes in the upper gourd and steams the dakissé for an hour. The paste thus obtained is dried in the sun for a whole day, and then placed in a canari where it is sought as the need arises.

Like the Bambara the Mossi sometimes take the dakissé seeds, mix them with millet grains, boil the whole thing, and then eat it.

As for the leaves, they are cooked by being placed in water and boiled with salt.

As far as dangono or ouéréda is concerned, the Mossi, like the Bambara, remove the bark. They allow this bark to cook in water, and add crushed peanuts and salt. The sauce thus obtained is called ziédo by the Mossi and na by the Bambara.

252 The ouéréda is also used as a substitute for tamarind fruit in the preparation of to sauce. The ouéréda bark is boiled, and millet flour is tossed into the water when the latter comes to a boil. Now the to need only be stirred and then transferred with huge wooden spoons to the gourd where it will be eaten.

Those who like ouéréda with meat, or who wish to cure a cold, boil the bark along with meat and eat it in this fashion.

As for ouéréda seeds, they are prepared exactly in the same manner as the bi seeds, and that is rather involved.

244 We have stated that the Mossi sow bi and ouéréda along the edges of millet fields, or even cultivate it in small separate plots. Let us add that the latter are tended by the women. The soukala heads merely sow both kinds of sorrel along the edges of their millet fields. In any case, when the Mossi have just cleared a plot, they often sow it with beans, sesame, bi, and ouéréda in the first /481/ year. It is only in the following year that they sow it with millet.

The Mossi also grow tomatoes.

There are many kinds in their territory, as among the Bambara.

The tomato is called koumba in Mossi. The bitter tomato is called koumba-gara or koumgara. The red tomato is called koumba-migou or kommigou. The white tomato is called koumba-pelra or koumpelra. In Bambara, the bitter tomato is called n'koyo ninkouna, the red tomato or cherry-tomato is called n'koyo bilé, and the white tomato is called n'koyo dié.

Like the Bambara, the Mossi, both men and women, grow tomatoes in separate plots. They first sow the seeds in a small space, no larger than a handkerchief, which they fertilize with wood ashes and sheep or goat dung. At the end of thirty days, when the plant has reached a few centimeters in height, they take it out and plant it in its permanent spot, again near the soukala, which they fertilize in the same manner as before. The tomatoes are ripe two months after sowing. If they are poorly tended, they only reach maturity at the time of the maize harvest (August). The green tomatoes are
[251] eaten as fruit. The ripe tomatoes are cooked and mashed in the sauce. When the maize is harvested, all remaining tomatoes are removed.

244 Some people, before they sow millet, lay out small plots of tomatoes in the fields reserved for millet, and water them morning and evening. They do this when the field is cleared just before sowing. Then they dig up the seedlings at the first rainfall and plant them elsewhere. Their tomatoes are ripe before the maize.

The three other kinds of tomatoes are cultivated in the same fashion.

The Mossi are familiar with the native eggplant. It is called boyo in Mossi, baulo in Nounouma, bio in Kassouna, boroma /482/ in Sissala. These eggplants are planted when the large red millet is sown. They are placed around the soukala, or in the bush near the watercourses. They are harvested in September at the same time as the large red millet.

The Mossi also cultivate pimentos (kiparé).

The seeds are sown near the soukala, without any preparatory work, at the beginning of the winter season. The weeds are removed after fifteen or twenty days. Two months after sowing, the young shoot produces offspring. The pimento may be gathered at that time. They are removed as the need arises and added to the sauce.

[438] The Mossi are fond of pimento. Those who grow it in large quantities sell the surplus at market.

249
415 As for gourds and calabashes, the Mossi have three kinds as listed below:

1. The ordinary calabash, which is very large and which is cut in two to make household calabashes. They call it vandé.

The Mossi plant it at the beginning of the winter season, in patches of good soil near the huts, or in similar spots in the bush. Holes are made in the ground with the koutiaga, in which seeds are placed and then covered up. The calabashes only ripen at the end of six or seven months, that is to say, when the winter season is over. Then they are cut in two, and the inner part is removed. This is how the household calabashes are fashioned.

2. The drinking calabash. This one has the natural shape of a swollen gourd with a neck widening toward the top. The Mossi call it binga. It is sown by the huts and made to climb upon the roofs.

249 415 It is gathered when the winter season is over. The upper tip is cut horizontally to create an opening, and water is poured inside to rot the fibrous inner part. When this is accomplished, the calabash is filled with pebbles and shaken until the torn fibers are removed. Once this has been done, the binga is ready to use. When they go [482] on a trip, the Mossi carry it suspended from the shoulder as a drinking gourd, like all Blacks of West Africa. /483/ They use a cork of green leaves to prevent the water from escaping.

3. The green gourds properly so called (kamboudou in Mossi) which are made to grow on the roofs. The Mossi do not eat them any more than they eat the two previous species. They cut them in two and fashion them into small household calabashes.

249 Calabashes are not cultivated as a food crop, therefore, but as a crop ranking with karnyanga, cotton, tobacco, hemp, indigo, etc.

244 The Mossi also grow a kind of large cucumber, yorolé. The Gourounsi call it gango and the Bambara dié.

At the beginning of the winter season, yorolé are planted around the soukala where the household refuse is discarded. Yorolé are planted by the women. Weeds, when they come out, are cleared with the ouaka. The yorolé are harvested immediately [252] after the millet and stored in the huts. They are cooked in water and eaten as they are, without seasoning or salt.

As for niri (the Mossi word) or yergan (the Nounouma word), it is a small gourd the size of an orange, green or yellowish green, that grows in the fields along the ground. The yergan are gathered when they are ripe, placed in a hole in the ground where they are left to rot, and then washed. Then the seeds are removed and used [252] in the sauce, or else they are eaten roasted and seasoned with salt. One does not eat the yergan themselves, therefore, but only their seeds.

The Mossi grow them in the south, at Nobéré and Rakaye. The yergan are sown at the same time as millet, around the soukala, in the fields of maize and large red millet. They are gathered during the first half of October.

439 262 As far as onions are concerned, the Mossi are familiar with them and call them albasalé, but do not cultivate them. It is the Haoussa, on their way in from Bandiagara, who buy them from the Habé and bring them to the Mossi. The growers themselves sometimes come in large caravans and sell them at Ouagadougou.

248 /484/ We are now finished with the Mossi food crops. Let us proceed to other crops.

Cotton (lamdo or lango in Mossi), is a dry-season crop here rather than a rainy-season crop.

It is planted near the soukala, or else in the bush along the watercourses.

During the winter season, grass along watercourses is cut down and left lying there to fertilize the ground. Then cotton is planted at the end of the rainy season. Holes are made into the earth with the koutiaga, three or four cotton seeds are placed in each hole and then covered up. The cotton emerges from the ground at the end of five or six days. Weeds are pulled out every fortnight. The cotton ripens at the end of 100 days. The stem may reach 75 centimeters or 1.50 meters in height, depending on the quality of the soil. Then comes the harvesting, which extends over a period of thirty or forty days, because one must wait for the pod to burst and the boll to appear before plucking. The women, girls, and small boys do this plucking.

The Mossi grow a considerable amount of cotton and take very good care of their fields. In any case, the soil and climate of the region are rather propitious to this crop. The harvesting is done in February and March. The average local price of cotton is one franc a kilogram. [435]

249 Tobacco is also partly a dry-season crop. At least its cultivation begins during the rainy season, extends into the dry season, and ends only in the latter. Tobacco is grown near the soukala like maize, large red millet, hemp, etc.

Tobacco is sown during the rainy season near the soukala. Twenty-five days are allowed to elapse, and then the plants are dug out and transplanted to another spot near the soukala. When the

249 rainy season ends, the tobacco has already grown tall. In the month of December, one begins to gather the leaves, taking first the lowest ones which are the first to ripen. One keeps plucking up the stem and gathering leaves until the end /485/ of January. Then the tobacco stems are cut down to get the seeds.

276 In order to make tobacco, the leaves are left to dry in the sun, and then, when they are dry, the men crush them in small mortars. They add a little water, stir, and make tobacco balls, or rather small elongated loaves worth one sou apiece. These loaves are entrusted to the women to be sold at market.

249 The Mossi also grow indigo (gara in Mossi, as in Bambara).

During the rainy season, indigo is sown in separate plots. First the grass is removed, and then the ground is struck here and there with the koutiaga. Then indigo seeds are broadcast, and the soil is moved with the ouaka to cover the seeds so that the birds will not eat them. At the end of a fortnight, the indigo begins to shoot. The weeds are removed by hand. The leaves may be gathered forty days later. They are gathered by hand and given to the women, who press them into flat loaves.

248 As for hemp (berenga in Mossi, pepan in Nounouma, kanzé in Kassouna, dafou in Mandé), it is sown among the maize that surrounds the soukala as soon as the latter has put forth shoots. The barenga has a long stalk similar to maize and hard to distinguish from the latter, but while maize is harvested in August, berenga stalks are left standing until October or November.

262 Its leaves are used for sauces.

241 Hemp closes our list of food crops and other crops in Mossi territory. Let us close with a few words on agricultural tools.

The basic tool of cultivation, here as in all other parts of West Africa, is the daba. The Mossi have two kinds:

1. The ouaka, a kind of daba with a broad, thin blade. It is used to turn up the soil.

/486/ 2. The koutiaga, koutiara or koutiaba. This is a kind of small hoe which is used to make holes when sowing grain or seeds.

The Mossi also have the following accessory tools:

1. The laré. This is an axe used to cut stumps when a plot is cleared.

241 2. The sououga, a knife used to cut down the heads of millet.

3. The gouégo, a curved knife, a kind of scythe which is used to cut straw, for example when preparing thatch for hut roofs.

To summarize, cultivation is the most important pursuit among the Mossi. It insures the subsistence of this population which is [161] relatively dense, since there are 25 inhabitants per square kilometer, a very high figure unusual for West Africa. The species of cultivated plants are as numerous as anywhere else, and the agricultural tools tend to be superior. In spite of all this, the Mossi are not very good cultivators, and in this respect I believe that they must be placed beneath the Bobo, Gourounsi, Habé, Bambara, etc. One senses that the Mossi descend at least in part from people who were once familiar with easier and more fruitful ways of procuring food (such as war and attendant loot) or, to put it another way, one senses the meeting of two groups, one of which was truly adept at cultivation while the other was less so. Thus, although the Mossi are cultivators first and foremost and actually subsist on cultivation, the latter is not as basic to them as it is to the Bobo, the Gourounsi, etc. They do practice cultivation, this is even by far their chief subsistence activity, and yet one cannot say that they are, in all respects, good cultivators.

231 Are they at least noteworthy stockbreeders?

To this we may give forthwith a negative answer. The Mossi are very mediocre, not to say worthless breeders. This is not to mean, incidentally, that there is no cattle in Mossi territory. There [563] is a great deal, on the contrary, and this stems from the presence of the Foulbé, who are cattle herders, as much as from the presence of the Yarsé, who /487/ have always owned considerable quantities of cattle, and from the density of the Mossi population. The Mossi themselves, nevertheless, own little cattle. To be more exact, they have a low per capita average of cattle.

We might list over-all or partial figures, but those most recently 231 563 compiled are vitiated by the fact that Mossi territory lost part of its cattle in recent years due to repeated famines around 1906-1908 and to an overly rigorous tax system that went into effect a little later. We shall, therefore, merely validate our statement that the

231 Mossi are very mediocre breeders by describing their manner of
563 caring for their animals. Instead of tending them or having this
done by their young men, they nearly always hand them over to the
Foulbé for herding. This is also done whenever possible by the
Bobo, Nounouma, and Sissala in the Leo residency, but it is not done
by the Kassonboura, Nankana, or Dagari. If the head of a Mossi
231 soukala is wealthy, he employs his own private Peuhl herder. If he
563 is of average means or poor, he makes an arrangement with other
464 Mossi in the same circumstances, and they all get together to
pay a single herder for their cattle. It is the poorer Foulbé, for
their part, who agree to herd Mossi cattle in this fashion.

The agreement that binds both parties grants the milk and butter to the Peuhl, but the increase of the herd devolves to the owner. This agreement is made without any definite time limits, and it is only broken if the herder fails to tend the animals properly. If he does his job well, on the other hand, he herds them indefinitely, and when he dies his son succeeds him. By the same token, when the Mossi owner dies, his son leaves the animals in the hands of the same Peuhl.

The Foulbé in charge of tending the herds live in low, conical straw huts at the back of the Mossi villages that own the herds. Not far from their huts, they build an enclosure where they leave the cattle during the night. They take the animals to graze in the bush in the morning, and bring them back in the evening. Whenever one of the Mossi owners wants milk or butter, he buys it from the Peuhl. Sometimes the latter offers him milk as a gift.

We shall see later, when we discuss the Foulbé, that in former
[567] times the Mossi often enslaved the small Foulbé bands that /488/
came with the intention of settling in Mossi territory. The Mossi
chiefs would confiscate the herds, and then, since they were unwilling
to care for them themselves, they would return them to the
dispossessed Foulbé in usufruct and in accordance with the agreement
we have just described. It must nevertheless be said that all
563 Foulbé in Mossi territory were not subjected to this high-handed
procedure. When we occupied Mossi territory, there were some
free and wealthy Foulbé, some Foulbé villages with chiefs of their
own. Actually, those Foulbé were by far the more numerous.

563 From a political standpoint, they were subject to the high Mossi powers just like the Yarsé, but like the latter and aside from this, they had preserved all their personal and economic freedom.

231 Let us add a few words about the various races of livestock which are to be found in Mossi territory.

As far as cattle is concerned, there are three races in the Ouagadougou circle:

1. Humped cattle, which is found mostly in the northern and eastern parts of the circle. This beef is tall, with a short dewlap and large horns. It is well suited to porterage, and furnishes excellent butcher's meat. There are some 5,000 head of humped cattle in the circle, 2,000 males and 3,000 females.

2. Humpless or local cattle. This beef has small horns, is found chiefly in the western and southwestern regions, and is usually designated by the name of Kipirsi cattle. It is not suited to porterage and yields inferior meat, but it is much stronger than the humped beef and better adapted to the climate.

3. Ordinary cattle, the result of a cross between the two preceding species. This beef has the strength of the Kipirsi cattle and is considerably taller. It is, furthermore, capable of being fattened, and can thus furnish meat of very good quality. This type predominates among the Tenkodogo Mossi. It comprises about 20,000 head, 8,000 males and 12,000 females.

It is therefore the local cattle (71,000 head), which is most numerous. The humped beeves are worth from 40 to 100 francs, [435] /489/ and the humpless beeves from 30 to 40 francs. The natives [232] are familiar with castration but practice it at random on any subject that comes to hand.

231 782 651 Prior to the arrival of the French, the Mossi used their cattle for meat and for sacrifices, but the two uses really amounted to one (the former) since the animals offered to a dead person are always eaten by the living. Nowadays, the Mossi sell their cattle to pay their tax. They still eat meat, although apparently not as much as before. The need to pay a tax which has been understood imperfectly, raised too rapidly and levied too harshly over the past few years, has forced them to save their cattle in order to sell it on the southern kola markets.

231 While the Mossi entrust their cattle to the Foulbé, as we have seen earlier, they do no such thing with their sheep which are kept with the goats. They are handed over to the young boys to care for during the winter and the dry season.

231 262 As almost everywhere in West Africa, the flesh of the sheep is of mediocre quality and smells of suint. The natives nevertheless like it very much.

231 The sheep have short hair and yield no wool. Actually, in all of West Africa, only the Macina sheep yield some.

"The Mossi sheep," says the Cahier des Rapports of the /Ouagadougou/ circle, "differs basically from the Macina sheep. While the latter are rather large, with very thick hair, the Ouagadougou sheep are small with short hair. The males have horns, and usually long manes.

"The sheep race of the Macina does not in fact exist among the Mossi, for the climate of the region does not permit it. In the northern part of the circle one may find, though rarely, some sheep belonging to that breed brought by the Dioula and destined for slaughter, but nowhere is that race raised /among the Mossi/.

"Although the Mossi sheep cannot be exploited in any way as far as their hair is concerned, they nevertheless constitute a source of income of some importance to the natives. /490/ Sheep are indeed quite numerous throughout the circle. They are chiefly consumed locally. A few flocks, however, are led to the markets of the Gold Coast."

[77] Let us note further the existence of so-called "house sheep," raised individually in the household in accordance with a custom introduced among the Mossi by the Yarsé, and fattened carefully to be slaughtered on festive occasions.

Goats are not entrusted to the Foulbé either, and the latter, incidentally, would not want them. During the winter season, they are herded by children who prevent them from eating the millet. During the dry season they are not herded, and they may wander about as they please.

The majority of Mossi goats are of dwarf species. Yet goats of usual size, large goats which are no doubt of Maure /Moorish/ origin, are also to be found in small numbers.

231 Donkeys are relatively numerous in Mossi territory. They are light grey in color, with a handsome black strip on the withers which extends down the right and left sides. The Mossi are very fond of [492] riding them. They do this, incidentally, all the way back, sitting on the donkey's rump, and it is a rather comical sight. They are beginning to use their donkeys in trading. Formerly they did not do this, since they did not engage in trading.

[435] The average price of a donkey is 25 francs.

Mule breeding is unknown among the Mossi. It is practiced in [232 439] Sokoto lands among the Haoussa, who sometimes bring mules into /Mossi/ territory.

As for horses, the Mossi have three races.

1. In the northeast there is a horse of rather large stature, from 1.50 to 1.60 meters in height, elegant, with delicate joints and lines recalling the true Arab horse. These horses, ridden too early and too recklessly by the natives, are soon worn out.

2. The southern horse, which is to be found in the southern part of the Ouagadougou circle and in the Tenkodogo residency. It is small in stature, thin, rather stocky. Better adapted to /491/ the Sudanese climate than the large northern horse, it possesses greater strength and endurance.

3. The Mossi horse proper, which seems to derive from a cross between the northern and southern races. It is small in stature, but strong-backed, vigorous, tough, and frugal. It is less handsome than the northern horse, but more attractive than the Boussansé horse. On the other hand, it endures the climate better than the former, less well than the latter.

231 435 A southern horse is worth from 80 to 100 francs, a Mossi horse is worth about 150 francs, and finally, a northern horse is worth from 200 to 400 francs. There are about 7,000 horses in the Ouagadougou circle.

231 The horses are kept in the villages during the dry season. They are given millet and peanut greens to eat. Grass is cut down in the bush and given to them when it dries. During the rainy season, the [554] horses are usually taken to the bush. Only the chiefs keep their horses in the soukala, where the animals are brought fresh grass, millet, water and salt. Other people take their horses to the bush and tie them beside their field so they may browse on the grass.

231 We mentioned earlier the karyanga, which is gathered wild or cultivated for horses. It is given to them at the height of the winter season.

Many Mossi own dogs. They use them to guard the soukala, to hunt in the bush, or for consumption. In the latter case, the [262 animal is fattened. Dog meat was sold on Mossi markets in the 435] old days, but the Yarsé, who are Moslems as we know, found it improper to exhibit dog meat alongside mutton or beef, and the custom was abandoned. Dogs are still killed inside the soukala, however, for consumption purposes.

[435] A dog is worth from 2 to 5 francs.

235 The Mossi have chickens and guinea fowl. The chickens are worth 250 cowries. The eggs are not sold.

It is the men who care for the chickens. They /492/ look in the bush for termite nests which they break to pieces so that the chickens may eat the termites. Sometimes, instead of one ration only, the chickens are issued two a day, one in the morning and one in the evening.

The guinea fowl are less numerous than the chickens. According [435 to their weight, they are worth from 250 to 300 cowries. Their 462] eggs are eaten. It is the men who care for the guinea fowl as for the chickens.

231 The Mossi place beehives in the trees. The hives consist of elongated straw cylinders shaped like a tom-tom. One of the sides is completely closed, while the other is perforated to allow the bees to come and go.

231 237 These hives are placed in the trees at the time when the warm season begins (March), and then the honey is gathered every month except at the height of the rainy season, when the downpours are too heavy. The children are in charge of this. They climb the tree with a straw torch on fire, and frighten the bees away. Then they take the honey and come down. In order to separate the honey from the wax, the honeycombs are placed in a large canari full of water. Another canari is heated intensely, and its burning-hot base is brought close to the surface of the jar where the combs are floating. The wax melts and sinks to the bottom, while the honey floats. The wax is sold to jewelers, who use it in the [306] manufacture of copper objects made by the lost-wax process. It is

231 also sold to shoemakers, who need it to rub and soften their hides.
237 In former days wax was given rather than sold. Nowadays it is sold because of the need for cash occasioned by the tax. As for honey,
[262] it is eaten pure, or with milk, or mixed with sarabout. It is also
272 made into a drink called bésou, béci, or bici, which is no other than hydromel. The latter is known, incidentally, throughout West Africa.

The Nounouma call it torosana, from sana, "drink" and toro, "honey." The Kassouna call it by the same name.

The women make hydromel as follows. They boil water, pour the honey into it, and stir. Then they add small-millet flour. The mixture is stirred with a piece of wood and then strained to rid the drink of /493/ all impurities. It is poured into a clean canari,
[435] which is carefully covered. At the end of two days, one has a yellowish drink which is worth 400 cowries or 0.40 franc a liter at Ouagadougou. Among the Nounouma, where honey is more abundant than among the Mossi, the liter is worth 0.20 franc (at Leo, for example). Hydromel is stronger and more potent than dolo, and one must be careful not to drink too much.

252 The Mossi also make little cakes with honey and millet flour. They call them baradaré. These cakes are not made by the Gourounsi.

831 This concludes our review of Mossi stockbreeding. Generally speaking, as we have seen, it is quite mediocre with the exception of two specialities, donkeys and horses. As far as donkeys are concerned, although the Mossi are no traders and have only begun to do a little trading since we occupied their territory, they have always liked the animals and used them either for their own transport or to carry grain. They have an average of one donkey per 42 inhabitants, while the Dagari only have one per 1,000, the Nounouma one per 166, the Sissala one per 55, the Kassonboura one per 50. In this respect, the Mossi run second only to the traders, the Yarsé, who have a pressing need for donkeys in connection with their trade and who have one per 23 inhabitants.

As for horse raising, the Mossi have left it to the Foulbé of Mossi territory. The Mossi nevertheless have an average of one horse per 166 inhabitants among the common people, and one per

231 64 inhabitants among the *nakomsé* (nobles, descendants of chiefs, true Mossi). The Dagari and Nounouma, on the other hand, have one horse per 1,000 inhabitants, the Sissala one per 400, the Kassonboura one per 300. The Yarsé, who are in better circumstances than the common Mossi but less fond of horses than the *nakomsé*, have one horse per 100 people. Finally, the Foulbé of Mossi territory, who raise horses, have one for every 26 people.

To summarize, Mossi stockbreeding is mediocre except for donkeys and horses. Let us proceed to the hunt.

224 First of all, like the Gourounsi and all other populations of West Africa, the Mossi hunt collectively during the dry, warm season.

/494/ This collective endeavor is their chief hunting method.

Aside from this, the cultivators hunt individually with bow and arrow, chiefly during the dry season although sometimes also during the damp season.

Finally, there are a few elephant hunters in the southern regions. They are to be found only in the south, for in Mossi territory proper the relative density of the population and resulting extent of cultivated land make for a nearly total absence of elephants. Gourounsi and Boussansé lands, on the other hand, which are much less densely populated, include some deserted areas where elephants may be found. Mossi hunters, therefore, have settled in the southern part of the territory, on the borders of Gourounsi and Boussansé lands, to scour both regions /for elephants/.

At Kombisiguiri, for example, there are ten of them, ten
soukala heads. They kill one or two elephants a year on the average.
They sell the meat to the village that stands nearest to the spot
[435] where the animal was killed. This nets them about 50,000 cowries.
As for the tusks, they sell them for 120,000 or 140,000 cowries,
sometimes 200,000. They always give a piece of the meat to the
chief of the canton where the animal was killed. They hunt with
[411] guns, while in the old days they hunted with poisoned spears but on
the same individual basis as they do now.

[463] Elephant hunters do not cultivate the soil during the winter season, but their wives and children do.

224 435 At Kombisiguiri, as we have just seen, there are 10 elephant hunters out of about 70 chiefs of compounds. Among the latter there are also some 20 men who hunt other animals, but they are cultivators who hunt on the side. They seek buffalo. When they kill one, they sell the meat to the village that stands nearest to the spot of the kill for 35,000 cowries. They also hunt the *koba* antelope, whose meat is worth from 20,000 cowries, the striped deer worth 6,500, the pig deer worth 5,000, the wart hog worth 10,000. They also hunt hares, bustards, guinea fowl, partridges, turtle-doves, etc.

224 262 The Mossi do not hunt monkeys and do not eat them. /495/ Actually, there are very few in Mossi territory, except for the red-haired monkeys who are great lovers of millet and maize.

224 825 778 The Mossi do not hunt crocodiles because the latter are held sacred. If one were to kill a crocodile, one would become ill, one's head would swell and one's teeth would fall out. Snakes, on the other hand, are killed and eaten, but in Mossi territory proper there are few large ones (pythons, boas) because the climate is not sufficiently humid. They are more numerous in Boussansé and Gourounsi lands.

226 Fishing is less important than hunting among the Mossi, for the simple reason that the land, with its low rainfall, only has muddy ponds during the dry season (on this subject, see our Introduction /not translated/). Thus, not only do the Mossi lack professional fishermen, but the villages do not even undertake collective fishing during the dry season (with the exception of some southern localities, in Kombisiguiri for example). Only children attempt to catch the mudfish which are always present in large quantities in small ponds, even when they are nearly dry.

222 Gathering, on the other hand, plays the same role among the Mossi as among the other Sudanese Blacks, and we shall study it here in some detail, since we have only described it in broad outline so far.

222 137 The tree most widespread throughout Mossi territory, and which grows wild, is the *karité*. Its leaves are a pleasant green, and it is somewhat similar to our Normandy apple tree. Its bark is whitish and made of small juxtaposed quadrilaterals. It is the *karité* which

222 137 predominates in the bush of the territory and which, owing to its abundance, lends the bush its particular character.

The karité fruit is an egg-shaped, elongated chestnut, smaller than the fruit of the European chestnut tree. It is distinguished from it even more clearly by its fleshy covering with its greenish skin. This flesh is soft, quite thick, and tastes delicious, like a very ripe, even overripe pear.

222 252 It is the women who gather the karité when the fruit is ripe, before the rainy season, at the beginning of April. First, the flesh surrounding the chestnut is eaten /496/. Then, after breaking the brown shell, the inner part is used to make the famous karité butter.

252 As everywhere else, it is the women who do this among the Mossi. They remove the shell of the chestnut, and then mash the sticky and whitish substance which is found inside. It is pounded on crushing stones with a little wooden pestle. Once this is done, the substance is cooked in a canari and then mashed again, this time in the large wooden mortars, until the paste acquires the consistency of butter. Then it is pounded once more between crushing stones. When this is over, the paste is placed in a canari with lukewarm water, and then stirred and manipulated by hand. This produces a sort of dirty-white cream, somewhat similar to beaten egg whites, but firmer. Then this cream is boiled until it changes into oil. The impurities drop to the bottom of the canari, and the oil floats. The latter is gathered, placed in a clean gourd, and allowed to cool. The result is a pale yellow butter. At first sight it looks like real butter, but when sniffed it reveals a characteristic odor which is unpleasant to Europeans.

Gourounsi women prepare karité butter in the same manner as Mossi women.

302 This butter is put to various uses. First of all, it is utilized for
grooming purposes. The women especially rub it into their hair in
copious quantities, not only among the Mossi but throughout the
Sudan as well. This, naturally enough, lends them an aroma which
[388] is not very pleasant to European noses. Karité butter is also made
into soap when certain ashes are added. Finally, it is used in cooking.

423 The karité trees standing in a field belong to the owner of the field. Those which stand in the bush belong to the people of the

423 village in whose territory the bush is located. They belong to all the people of the village, for Mossi chiefs have not set those trees aside for themselves as they did with the *néré* trees.

222 137 The *néré* are found in large numbers in Mossi territory, although they are far less numerous than the *karité*, which literally fill the bush. The ratio must be something like one /497/ *néré* for every fifteen *karité*. The *néré* is nevertheless far from rare, and sometimes ten or fifteen are to be found together, standing not far apart. The *néré* is easily distinguished by its branches which expand in a fanlike arrangement from a short but elegant trunk. The branches spread out very prettily, in triangular fashion, so the *néré* blossoms out like a shower of fireworks. Its leaves are no less characteristic than its shape. They are of a dark, oxydized green which contrasts with the superb brilliant green of the *karité*. The *néré* leaves are similar to those of the acacia.

The *néré* is called *roga* or *goaga*, *doga* or *doaga* in Mossi. It is called *soungou* in Nounouma and Kassouna, *sõla* in Sissala. The Nankana call it *roga* or *doga* like the Mossi.

The fruits of the *néré* are long brown pods that grow in clusters on the tree and that contain a yellow substance, sweet to the taste, packed around a sort of very elongated pit. The women gather these 222 423 fruits approximately from March 15 to April 15. The neré trees standing in a field belong to the owner of the field, but the Mossi village chiefs claim ownership to those that stand in the uncultivated bush.

Among the Gourounsi, as we know, the *néré* that stand in a field, even if the latter is not being cultivated at the moment, belong to the owner of the field, while those that stand in the uncultivated bush surrounding the village belong to all the people of the village.

This points up the difference between a centralized kingdom where the authority of the chiefs is strong, and small independent cantons or villages where it is not.

252 261 *Néré* is put to many uses. First of all, the yellow meal, including the more solid central part that runs from one end of the pod to the other like a pit, is mashed by the women in millet mortars or in wooden gourds. Once mashed, it is thinned with

252 boiling water and eaten in this fashion. This is an important source
261 of food in times of famine which, when they come among the Blacks, usually come in May, June, and the first half of July. The *néré* gathered in March and April comes just in time to combat the famine.

/498/ As for the seeds of the fruit, they are removed and set
252 aside before the sweet meal is mashed. They are preserved to make
263 *kologo* (the Mossi name) or *soumbara* (the Mandé name), a pungent condiment highly prized by the Blacks. In order to make this, the women boil the seeds, allow them to cool, stamp on them to remove the skin, and wash them carefully at the watercourse. Sometimes the skin is removed by hand. Then they are cooked for 24 hours, and steeped in water for another 48 in a well-covered *canari*, in the shade, in a damp spot, to rot the seeds. Then they are laid to dry in the sun on a mat for two days, and pressed with the hands into balls of varying size. It is in this shape that the *soumbara* is utilized or sold. In Mossi territory, small balls are
[435] worth 100 cowries apiece and large ones 300. At Leo, in Nounouma territory, all balls are the same size and worth 100 cowries. In appearance, the *kologo* is rather similar to that black coloring matter used by French housewives to add substance to the broth. Whenever a woman wants to use some *kologo*, to add some to the sauce, she pries loose a small piece from the ball with the tip of a knife and mashes it with the crushing stone. She pours the resulting powder into the sauce.

356 Let us note further that the bark of the *néré* pod is also used, although not for eating purposes. The Mossi and Gourounsi use it to blacken and polish the floor of their huts and clay roofs. The *néré* bark is seeped in water for one day, and then the water is tossed on the surface to be polished, that has been tamped down carefully first. The floor is tamped again with the water, and then allowed to dry. This is done three or four times, and in the end the clay surface acquires a handsome black or grey polish. It almost becomes a mirror if the procedure is carried out properly.

284 Finally, to close our list of the uses to which *néré* is put, we
291 have seen that the brown filaments that grow on the bark of the *néré* pod are used among the Gourounsi to make belts for /499/ the women, or rather cords to hold up the bunches of leaves that constitute the sole garment of local ladies.

222 Let us now proceed to the baobab.

137 It is called touéra or touéga in Mossi (sira or izira in Bambara). It is to be found most everywhere in the Mossi bush, and especially in rocky, hilly spots near large streams.

The fruit of the baobab is gathered from December to April. It is a sort of huge green almond hanging from a stem that often 252 reaches 25 or 30 centimeters in length. One breaks the shell, removes the flesh, and mashes it in the mortar (this, of course, is done by the women). Once this is done, the resulting meal is strained through a straw strainer. It is now ready to eat.

This is called toïdésoum in Mossi, tiondé-boé in Peuhl, siramogou in Mandé (from sira, "baobab" and mogou, "flour"). [438] Colloquially, Europeans call it "monkey bread." It is sold on Mossi markets as on the markets of Bambara country.

To prepare it for consumption, this meal is thinned with milk, or water if there is no milk, or else mixed with millet flour. The latter mixture is called sangaré ni siramogou in Bambara ("millet flour and baobab flour"). The meal may also be mixed with néré flour.

It is not only the fruit of the baobab, however, that is utilized. The fresh green leaves are used as a sauce ingredient. The dried leaves are used to make tonéra (lalo in Foutanké /Futajalonke?/, namourou or namougou in Bambara, oro in Peuhl). The leaves are dried and crushed in a mortar to make a powder that is added to sauce.

283 Finally, let us add that the bark of the baobab is used to make rope.

222 After the karité, néré, and baobab, we must list the tamarind

137 tree (Tamarindus indica), koussouga or poussouga in Mossi, n'tomi in Bambara.

222 The fruit of the tamarind is a pod, longer than a finger /500/

137 and about the same thickness, that ripens between January and April.

263 It is a yellow-green brown. When cut along its length, it is found to contain some ten little round fruits, the size of half a hazelnut, lying in a row within the greenish pulp. Only the dried pod is used, after removing the little fruits which have a rather pleasing taste when fresh, something between the kola nut and the hazelnut. When the pod is dry, however, the fruits are also dried out and hard, and they are discarded.

222 263 These pods, of course, are not eaten. They merely serve to make the *tô* sauce fresh and sour, as the Blacks like it.

[261] The pods[1] themselves are only eaten in times of famine, because they give colic. In addition, they harm the mouth, tongue, and teeth (gingivitis).

In ordinary times, the natives use them medically as a fever remedy. They boil them with pimento and drink the decoction. This is done by the Mossi as well as by the Gourounsi, Bambara, etc.

Tamarind pods are also made into dry balls which are sold at market. They are crudely mashed with a pestle, and then pressed together in cold water into balls of varying size. Whenever one wishes to give the *to* a tamarind taste, one pries loose a small piece of the ball with a knife and places it in the *canari* of boiling water where millet flour will be added.

278 757 Like the Bambara, the Mossi prepare a purging drink with the tamarind pod, either fresh or dried. It is boiled in water, a tiny bit of millet flour is added, and the drink is consumed when slightly warm. This decoction has laxative properties. The Haoussa are also familiar with it, but the Gourounsi are not.

222 137 To summarize, the tamarind pod has two chief uses among the Mossi and other Blacks of West Africa. It serves to sour and freshen the *tô*, and it also serves as a purgative.

222 Let us add that Dr. Rançon, in the account of his /501/ trip through Upper Gambia, described the preparation of a tamarind drink for European consumption. The pod is left to dissolve in cold water for three hours, sugar is added, and a sort of lemonade results.

222 137 The Mossi have *rônier* in every village. This, as we know, is a variety of palm tree.

"It is the largest palm tree, *Borassus flabelliformis*," says Dr. Rançon (*Dans la Haute-Gambie*, pages 139 to 141). "It is easy to recognize owing to its height and characteristic appearance. Its trunk is very long and may sometimes reach 25 or 30 meters. It is swollen in the middle, and its lower and upper parts are much less thick, much more slender. The bark is blackish and bears scars of the wounds left by fallen leaves. The wood, although it looks spongy, is quite tough and hard to dent with a saw. *Rônier* logs are heavier than water. This is one of the rare woods that do not float. The leaves of a grown *rônier* are clustered in a thick bunch at the

[1] [i.e. tamarind pods—Analyst.]

222 137 top of the trunk, and they are deeply indented. The trunk never bears leaves except when it is young. The dark green of the leaves and their toughness makes /sic/ them look from afar like the artificial zinc leaves of some theatrical backdrops or weather vanes. The youngest leaves at the top are strongly imbricated and ensheathed, and ivory white in color. They are very tender and yield palm cabbage. The leaves of the rônier only fall off when completely dry.

"The fruits, which are called rône, come in clusters of about forty or fifty. They are the size of a medium-sized melon and very heavy. Their covering is green when they are young, orange-yellow when they are ripe. The large seeds, which are blackish and disc-shaped, or like spheres flattened at the poles, are surrounded with a fibrous, gold-yellow meat which is very watery and very fragrant. [261] Its taste is pleasant, although slightly tinged with turpentine. The natives eat large quantities of it, especially in times of scarcity.

313 137 "Rônier wood is dense, long lasting, and remarkably tough. 502/ Immune to insects and humidity, it is excellently suited to the manufacture of piles, and often used in the construction of bridges and wharves. The male trees alone are used. The female trees can only be used for fencing, for they are hollow and lacking in strength....

222 137 262 "In addition to the fruit, the Blacks also eat the roots of the young shoots, the taste of which is slightly astringent and rather unpleasant. They are eaten raw. The terminal buds of the palms are very tender. They are palm cabbages, less tasty to be sure than those of Oreodoxa oleracea, but nevertheless deserving of recognition. When cut into small pieces 2 centimeters square and well seasoned with oil, vinegar, salt and pepper, they make a very good salad, especially if they were previously soaked for twenty-four hours. This dish is highly prized by Europeans who live in the Sudan. Finally, [263 273] the rônier yields a fairly abundant sap from which sugar might be extracted. When fermented, it produces a palm wine of inferior quality."

137 [285] It must be added that the fibers of the rônier leaves are also utilized. The West African Blacks use them to make baskets (as for example in Mossi territory) or cords (as for instance in Upper Gambia).

137 They are 7 or 8 meters tall, 10 meters at most, and their huge fruits are bunched in clusters of five or six rather than forty or fifty.

There are no rônier in the Mossi bush itself, but there are some
137 in every Mossi village. They originated from seeds tossed at random
229 after eating the fruits, or from an ancient cultivation of the tree.
The rônier, therefore, is not a natural product of Mossi territory and should not, in all exactitude, be listed among the gathering crops. On the other hand, can it be listed with the cultivated crops at the present day, and can we call cultivation the act of tossing seeds to the ground in order to get rid of them? No matter what the truth may be, the Mossi eat /503/ the fruits of their rônier but do not extract any palm wine. As we have just said, they use the fibers of the leaves for their wickerwork.

137 While the rônier occur in Mossi territory, there are, on the other hand, no palm-oil trees and palmier-ban /?/. Those begin to appear only in Gourounsi territory, to the south of the Mossi.

229
137 We have just reviewed the most important gathering trees in the area, but the Mossi bush contains many others, less important to be sure but nevertheless useful, which we shall now mention.

First, there is the ganra or ganga (sounsoun in Mandé, diomba in Peuhl and Sarakolé). This is the medlar tree of West Africa. In appearance, it is a big tree similar to the karité but even bigger, with a thicker and more powerful trunk.

The fruit is a medlar, smaller than the European one. When green, it has the same acrid taste and numbs the mouth. When ripe, it is such as we eat it in Europe. The natives begin to eat it during the rainy season and consume it until January.

386
171 The wives of Bambara blacksmiths make a varnish for pots and canari with the bark of the sounsoun. As for the wives of Mossi blacksmiths, they prefer to use for this purpose the bark of two trees we shall mention later, the nobora and the sibi. In Gourounsi territory, on the other hand, the women who make pottery pluck the medlars while still green and crush them. They add water, thus making a sort of varnish which they use on the canari after they are fired. The ganra is called kano in Nounouma, kakano in Kassouna, kalo in Sissala, and ganra or ganga in Nankana and Mossi.

825 Let us add that among the Mossi, as in all of West Africa, the ganra tree is closely related to fetishistic superstitions, and will be mentioned again in a later chapter on religion.

222 137 Now for the kankanga (plural kankamsé; the Bambara and Malinké call it n'toro, the Foulbé guip-bi, and the Nounouma /504/ kaporo). The kankanga is the native fig tree of West Africa. Its fruits are none other than figs, not as good to be sure as those eaten in Europe, but figs nevertheless. The Mossi, as well as the Gourounsi, Bambara, etc., usually eat these figs as they are. There are ripe ones to be found at all times of the year, and one plucks them at will.
252 261 In times of famine, instead of eating them in this fashion, one allows them to dry in the sun and then mashes them on crushing stones (among the Mossi) or in small mortars (among the Bambara). They are thus made into a sort of meal which is boiled and which serves as a substitute for millet flour. At such times the Mossi also eat the leaves of the kankanga. They cook them in boiling water and add salt.

252 As for the Gourounsi, sometimes they eat the figs fresh, and sometimes they prepare them for their sauces. In the latter case they boil them, cut them to pieces, and dry them in the sun. When the pieces are quite dry they are laid aside, and whenever needed one of them is mashed, reduced to powder, and added to the sauce.

222 137 Now for nobora or noboga (n'kouna in Mandé, kountan in Khassonké /Kasonke/, hèdè in Foulbé and Toucouleur, kounguié in Sarakòlé, salo in Nounouma, kansalo in Kassouna).

The nobora is a kind of wild plum tree. Its fruits ripen from the time when millet is sown until the time when it reaches a height of 80 centimeters, that is to say, between May and July.

273 The fruits of the n'kouna are either eaten fresh or made into a sort of drink called noborame in Mossi, n'kounangui in Mandé, n'diam hèdam in Foulbé. In all three tongues, this means "nobora (or n'kouna) water." This drink is known throughout the Sudan.

In order to prepare this drink, the fruits are placed in water after being pricked with a small piece of wood to let the juice run, and they are left there for twelve hours. At the end of this period of time, they are removed and the water is boiled for a /505/ quarter of an hour. Once this is done, one takes some of the residue left at the bottom of the canari in which dolo is made, and puts it in the jar containing n'kounangui. The liquid is allowed to rest for one night. In the morning, the drink is gaseous and ready for consumption. It is not as strong as dolo.

273 The Mossi make n'kounangui, like the Bambara, but the Toucouleur and Foulah do not because they are Moslems. The latter's slaves alone, being fetishists make some. The Gourounsi do not make it either, but this is because n'kouna is scarce in Gourounga country. The Gourounsi claim that this tree keeps hyenas away, and when someone dies in the bush and is buried on the spot, a branch of n'kouna is planted where he was buried. It is said that the hyenas will wander about at a distance, but will never dare come close and dig up the body. The Gourounsi claim that this is a matter of common knowledge.

222 137 The léla is another kind of wild plum tree. It is called séno in Bambara and Malinké, filina in Nounouma, mia in Kassouna, mellemoila in Sissala. Its plums are tiny. They are yellow before they ripen, and red when completely ripe (March-May). They are no larger than the tip of the finger, and they are eaten as they are. The almond is not eaten. Children sometimes munch on it, but when eaten in large quantities it causes colic.

The sibi, another tree found in the Mossi bush, is called n'pékou in Bambara and Peuhl, bembé in Sarakolé. The Nounouma called it kakian, the Kassouna kakiéno, the Nankana sibi like the Mossi. The fruit is tiny and sometimes causes colic. It ripens during the dry and warm season, and it is eaten as it comes. The [27a] Habé prepare a drink from it which is called diam-n'pékoudian ("n'pékou water") by the local Foulbé and Toucouleur. The Mossi, Gourounsi, and Bambara do not make this drink.

Let us cite also the tiarala (tiaralsé or tiaralésé in the plural, n'ségué in Bambara, saò in Nounouma). The Mossi are very fond of [27b] the tiarala fruit, which is highly aromatic and which is used /506/ to lend fragrance to native tobacco. They also eat the leaves.

Let us proceed to kara (or kaka). This is the Mandé n'taba. It is the Mandé n'tába. It is called dankola in Nounouma and Sissala, kalankola in Kassonboura.

"The n'taba," says André Rançon (Dans la Haute-Gambie, page 35), "is a malvoidea /?/ of the Sterculiacea family. It is the Sterculia cordifolia Cav., thus named because its leaves are heart-shaped. It is one of the most beautiful plants of tropical African regions. It is easily recognized by its enormous trunk, huge leaves,

222 and very peculiar fruit. The latter, which grows at the tip of
137 young boughs, is shaped like a huge pod whose pulpy valves open when pressure is exercised along the convex ridge. Its free tip is equipped with a sort of pulpy appendage shaped like a thorn, about 0.06 meter in length. When ripe, the fruit is of a distinctive light-red color. It contains a dozen polyhedral seeds immersed in a yellowish flesh which is tasty and highly fragrant. It is one of the best desserts I came across in the Sudan, and we often feasted on it. The fruits are clustered in bunches of three, five, or seven, and strongly fastened to the peduncle and stem that hold them. They rarely fall, and in order to gather them one must break the bough that bears them."

André Rançon adds (page 36) that the *n'taba* is related to the kola nut. It is apparently a sort of false kola tree.

The *n'taba* fruits ripen from December to April. The Mossi and Gourounsi eat them when they have dried out on the tree, or
252 else as they come /fresh/, or after boiling them for a quarter of an
435 hour. They are sold on Mossi markets at the price of three for 1 cowrie, six for 2 cowries, etc., that is to say, 150 for 1 sou.

272 These fruits are also used to prepare a drink among the Mossi and Gourounsi. They are boiled, mashed, placed in a canari filter, that is, a *canari* perforated at the bottom which is placed on top of another *canari*. Water is poured upon the fruits /507/, becomes permeated with the juice, and passes on to the bottom *canari*. This drink is sweet and tastes like honey.

222 Let us cite also the *kamsoro* (*n'kodo* in Bambara). It is a very
137 big, thickset tree, with characteristic leaves. The latter are very tough, very large, very thick, their shape ovoidal or rather a little more elongated than an egg, and their color a brilliant green.

The fruits of this tree are eaten throughout the year, especially by children, because ripe ones are to be found at all times.

There are no *kamsoro* in Gourounga territory.

Let us also cite the *véda* or *ouéda*, the caoutchouc liana, called *n'saba* in Mandé, *fogui* in Peuhl, *fittigné* in Sarakolé, which is also called *laré* and *Vahea senegalensis*. This liana bears fruits that ripen in March and April. They might best be compared to oranges. They are green before they ripen and orange-yellow when ripe. Rançon claims that they are delicious. These fruits are eaten as they

222 come, and they are not used to prepare any sort of drink.

137 The n'saba is found almost everywhere in West Africa, but grows scarcer toward the north. It is found in Mossi and Gourounsi territories in very small numbers.

314 The Dagari, who live farther south than the Gourounsi, gather the caoutchouc from the n'saba lianas and make wads with it for the tip of the sticks used to beat their tom-toms. The Gourounsi griot purchase these sticks from the Dagari. The Mossi and Gourounsi do not themselves gather the n'saba caoutchouc.

In the south this liana is used to make cords, but this is not done among the Mossi or Gourounsi.

222 137 261 252 In addition to the plants we have just mentioned and which are utilized at all times, there are others whose products are used almost exclusively in times of famine. Such are the konkouira, sabatouli, silikoré, etc.

The konkouira is a big tree whose Mandé name is n'zéfé. Its leaves are gathered when they are beginning to grow when they are still quite tender. They are mashed in a small mortar with a pestle, and then placed in water for two hours. Then they are worked into balls, with the addition of millet flour. A canari is filled with water and put on the fire /508/, and then twigs are laid across its mouth, parallel to each other, to form a grill on which the konkouira balls are placed. In order to ensure thorough cooking, the balls are covered with an overturned gourd which encloses them and prevents the steam from escaping too rapidly. The balls are steamed in this fashion for one hour, and then they are ready to eat.

These leaves are never eaten straight but always with millet flour, and they really serve to stretch the flour supply. If they were eaten straight, they would cause colic. In any case they cause hiccups (gounsounkouira in Mossi). They are therefore more a food for times of famine.

The silikoré or kalanianga (both are Mossi names) is a small thorny bush that grows around trees and bears very small fruits. The women gather those fruits during the rainy season. They mash them in a small trough and then boil them in a canari. This first water is discarded, and the fruits boiled a second time. Again the water is discarded, and the fruits are washed in cold water. Karité butter and salt are added, and the mixture is eaten. The silikoré are used

222 chiefly in times of famine, but occasionally at other times also.

137 The silikoré fruits are not eaten among the Gourounsi and Bambara. 261

252 Gonsé is called sofarangoni in Bambara. It is a shrub, the height of a man, that yields kéména. The latter is a pod containing small flat beans of a sort, very thin, that ripen at the time of the millet harvest. These /beans/ are boiled twice, and the water is discarded both times. Then they are washed in cold water and boiled again, for the last time, in a canari covered with a straw lid. Once this is done karité butter is added, and the mixture is eaten. Kéména [435] is sold at market ready made. A handful is worth 5 cowries (1/2 centime). Kéména is also mixed with /true/ beans and either eaten or sold in this fashion.

Lamboye is called béré in Bambara, guidili in Peuhl. It is found almost everywhere in the Sudan. Its fruits, or rather seeds, are eaten only in times of famine. They are round, very /509/ tiny, and they ripen during the dry and warm season. They are gathered, laid out in the sun, and then crushed in a small mortar to break the outer membrane. Once this is done, they are soaked in water for eight days. This water is discarded, and the seeds are washed twice. Then they are boiled, salt is added, and they are eaten. This is done only in times of famine. These seeds are poisonous, as we can see, and would be toxic if they were not submitted to these various processes.

222 Sabatouli (bembé in Bambara and Sôninké) is a tree whose fruits 137 ripen one month after the first rains (that is, in May). The fruit is very tiny, no larger than a grain of maize. One eats it as it comes, when passing by or clearing land in the bush, or else one takes it to the village children. Nothing else is done with it. Sabatouli is found almost everywhere in the Sudan.

Vâka is a tree which is called goumou or goumbou in Bambara. The flowers of this tree, which are red, are used to make sauce when there is no gombo left. It is called fofo in Nounouma and Sissala, kafro in Kassouna. Its fruits are not eaten.

We overlooked the jujube tree above. It is called mourouga in Mossi, n'tomono in Bambara, gouésso in Nounouma and Kassouna. The Mossi eat the fruits only when traveling through the bush. The Gourounsi do not eat them at all.

222 137 Let us mention also kankalra (lenga in Mandé), whose leaves are eaten by the Mossi.

We have just reviewed the trees and shrubs whose produce is utilized by the Mossi. We must still say a word about mushrooms, wild roots, and wild fodder.

Mushrooms are called goudou in Mossi, dakon in Nounouma and Kassouna, kon in Sissala. They grow in the Mossi bush during the winter season, as they do in Gourounsi territory and incidentally throughout West Africa, and they are gathered by the women. Two kinds are distinguished, the /510/ termite-nest mushrooms (yaoré-goudou in Mossi, from yaoré, "termite nest," and goûdou, "mushroom") and the mushrooms that grow among refuse. The latter are called niandara-goûdou, meaning "straw mushrooms," because they grow chiefly under old discarded roof thatch. These mushrooms taste better, but those on termite nests are bigger.

252 The Mossi cook mushrooms in karité butter, mash them in the butter, and eat them. They also use them to make a sauce for the sarabout to which body is added with beans, cooked separately and also mashed. The sarabout (Mossi name for tô) is eaten after dipping in the bean-and-mushroom sauce.

Gourounsi women boil the mushrooms and then leave them to dry on the soukala roofs. They take a handful or two a day for their sauces. To this end, they boil the mushrooms again without mashing them and add soumbara and salt. Mushrooms are never served as a separate dish among the Gourounsi.

222 137 Let us proceed to edible roots.

Vidiba is a sort of wild onion called fanto by the Bambara, Sarakolé, and Foulbé.

261 252 The Bambara use vidiba leaves to make sauce, but they do not eat the onion itself because it is poisonous. The Mossi do likewise, except in times of famine. At such times, the onion is rubbed with sand until the black membrane is removed, and then it is copiously washed. Then it is boiled in a canari filled with water to the brim and covered, and the cooking is maintained until all the water has evaporated. Then ashes are gathered, strained, and added to the contents of the gourd. The mixture is stirred with a piece of wood, and then the vidiba is removed, cut to pieces, and eaten.

222 137 Séba is a kind of long, poisonous, black turnip which is eaten
261 only in times of famine and after protracted cooking.

Seba and vidiba caused the death of many people during the last Mossi famine by giving them dysentery.

137 /511/ As for wild fodder found in Mossi territory, there is first
231 of all kénibédo, that grows in bunches 30 centimeters high in damp hollows. Its leaves are rudimentary. It is severed 20 centimeters from the ground and stored during the dry season.

Then there are the fodder plants belonging to the papilionaceous family, densa and youbenga. The tiny stem of densa or youbenga is not severed from the plant itself, which reaches a height of 0.30 or 0.40 meter in both cases. Horses eat them either green or dry, indiscriminately.

137 Finally, let us say a word about souga, a sort of wild hemp
314 called thus by the Mossi. The Nounouma call it boupo, and the
283 Kassouna bénédévio. It is found only in certain parts of Mossi territory, but it grows throughout Gourounsi lands. Its bark yields very tough white fibers which the natives use in the manufacture of rope, string or thread for fishing implements. The bark does not keep through the dry season, so it is reduced to fibers during the rainy season. The fibers, on the other hand, can take the most intensive dryness without deteriorating. Souga is not cultivated.

222 We are now finished with Mossi gathering activities. They have
433 a certain importance, as we have just seen, the same one on the whole as in other Sudanese populations. They are infinitely less important than cultivation, of course, but only slightly less so than stockbreeding, and they must be placed on the same level as the hunt. They are far more important than fishing or arboriculture.

245 The latter deserves no real mention. It hardly exists among the
433 Mossi. It is limited to what we described earlier about the rônier and to the planting, here and there, of a few papaw trees.

433 In short, cultivation comes first, with stockbreeding trailing far behind, then gathering and hunting on the same level, then fishing and finally arboriculture.

010 /512/ Industries flourish among the Mossi. We shall review one by one, in detail, the various trades they exercise.

326 First, there is that of the blacksmith (saba or sahaba in the local tongue). Two kinds of blacksmiths may be distinguished among the Mossi. First, the blacksmiths who are gathered into separate villages or in large special quarters within the village, both cases being frequent in the northern part of Mossi territory, and secondly the isolated blacksmiths, such as those of Ouagadougou for example.

325 326 The blacksmiths who live in separate villages or quarters smelt the iron ore in large furnaces in the bush. They do this once a year, during the dry season, and the process takes one month.

The whole blacksmith village sets down to the task and builds a certain number of blast furnaces, at the ratio of one for every two blacksmiths.

The furnaces are built of red earth near the hills that contain iron ore, and it takes five days to build one of them. Once this is done each blacksmith pair takes over a furnace and uses it. The smiths do not use it together, incidentally, but each one in turn.

Our blacksmiths break up the soil with a soumbéré or taré. They break up pieces of ore and pile them near the furnace. They spread out a layer of dry wood at the bottom of the furnace, then a layer of ore, then another layer of wood, another layer of ore, etc., up to the top. Then the fire is lit.

The fire is stirred with bellows and kept up for three days. At the end of this period of time, the doors made at the bottom of the blast furnace are opened. The iron escapes through these special openings, which are distinct from the permanently open doors through which the slag runs out. On the fourth day the iron has cooled off, and it is removed from the little pits into which it has flowed. It is broken with an iron mallet and returned to the furnace.

The total labor lasts one month. Every evening our blacksmiths return to the village. Some of them produce ten loads of iron /513/ (about 300 kilograms), others only two or three (60 or 90 kilograms).

326 135 423 As for isolated blacksmiths, they do not smelt iron. They buy it from the blacksmiths of the Yatenga (Ouahigouya circle) who are great iron smelters and who own small, famed ferruginous hills around Ouahigouya.

326 Mossi blacksmiths make *ouaka*, *koutiaga*, axes, knives, daggers, swords, spearheads, arrowheads, razors, iron bracelets for women, men, nobles, spoons, horse bits, stirrups, spurs, etc. [435] They also make needles of considerable thickness which are worth 10 cowries apiece, or five for 1 sou.

During the winter season, they hardly make anything beside *ouaka*.[1] During the dry season, they make all the other items.

They also make *zandé*, or clubs with iron tips. Let us say 411 326 a word about clubs, which are in a way the Mossi national weapon. A Mossi would believe himself dishonored if he were not to bear a club solemnly on his right shoulder wherever he goes. Even small boys carry them, proportioned to size, and they do this with no less solemnity than their elders.

Mossi clubs are of three kinds:

1. Some made wholly of wood, handle and body both, and carved all of one piece. They are called *dori*.

2. Others whose handle is made of wood, but whose head consists of a large round stone imbedded at the tip of the handle. These clubs are called *gougou*.

3. Finally, the clubs with a wooden handle and an iron mallet inserted perpendicularly at the tip of the handle. These are the *zandé* or *zann'dé*. Sometimes the handle is covered with hide, and this makes it richer and more handsome.

326 Blacksmiths make only the iron part of the *zandé*. The other kinds of clubs are made by the owners themselves.

Blacksmiths only make *zandé* on order. While they make *ouaka* and *koutiaga* in advance and have them taken /514/ to market in quantities, they only make *zandé* when someone comes and asks for one.

The Mossi blacksmiths, therefore, work sometimes on order and sometimes to build up their stock. They sell this stock at market through their children, just as their wives go there to sell the pottery they manufacture.

325 413 The tools used by Mossi blacksmiths are as follows:

1. A small anvil called *kissiguiré*, with a pointed iron piece underneath, which can be held in the hand or thrust into the ground.

[1] [i.e. A kind of large hoe, see p. 32. —Analyst]

325 413 2. An iron mallet called *zinré* which is used as a hammer to strike the above-mentioned anvil. These items are very small. The anvil is held in one hand and the mallet in the other.

3. A pair of tongs (*iéougo*) to pick the iron from the fire and put it on the anvil.

4. A hammer called *kouadara,* made of a thick, short, and solid wooden handle into which a long and narrow iron mallet has been driven to make a hammer.

5. A rasp (*sodara* or *chandara*), slightly curved, and hafted to a wooden handle.

6. A sort of small wedge to cut the iron (*kitéga*). This wedge is placed on the piece of iron to be cut, and it is hit with the mallet.

7. A small-sized tool called *karé* that consists of a curved blade, 3 centimeters long by 2 wide, hafted to a short piece of wood. The *karé* is used to sharpen knives.

8. The goatskin bellows (*zougoudou*).

Such are the tools of the Mossi blacksmith which, incidentally, he makes himself.

325 435

The mallet is worth	5,000	cowries	(5 francs)
The anvil	10,000	"	(10 francs)
The hammer	1,000	"	(1 franc)
The nippers	700	"	(0.70 francs)
The rasp	500	"	(0.50 francs)
The iron wedge	200	"	(0.20 francs)
The sharpener	200	"	(0.20 francs)

323 The wives of Mossi blacksmiths make pottery. They are not the only ones to do this, as we shall see later, but they do it, at least in the special blacksmith's villages and quarters.

They make pottery with *bérédo,* that special black earth, a kind of clay we have already mentioned/in a previous chapter, not translated/. They crush and mash old *canari* and add this powder to the *bérédo.* This makes the pots stronger than if fresh *bérédo* were used. When the pots have been fashioned, the women leave them to dry in the sun for six or seven days. While this drying process is taking place, they gather firewood in the bush. Then they place a layer of wood in a round oven (about 1 1/2 meters high, very

323 wide, 2 meters in diameter, and open at the top), then some straw on which the pots are laid, and then more straw and firewood. They set this afire and keep it burning for twelve hours.

[314] In order to polish their pots, the women take the bark of the *nobora* or *n'kouna*. They soak it in huge *canari* for a whole day. The water acquires a reddish hue. The fired and cooled pots are immersed in these *canari* for a while, and then allowed to dry in the open air. When this is over, the pots may be taken to market and sold.

The blacksmiths' wives make their pottery during the dry season. During the winter season, they work in their husbands' fields.

326 241 During the winter season, Mossi blacksmiths work both at cultivation and at their trade, but mostly at cultivation. During the dry season, on the other hand, they work only at the blacksmith's trade.

As far as cultivation is concerned, they mostly grow small millet, followed by large white millet and large red millet, maize, peanuts, underground peas, sesame, and beans. They cultivate cotton and tobacco, but no indigo. Their wives sow *gombo*, etc.

326 231 /516/ They own livestock which their children herd. As a rule, they have a little more livestock than other Mossi, except for goats and donkeys. This, incidentally, should not surprise us, for the Negro blacksmiths of West Africa often display an ability for stockbreeding and especially for horse trading. Among the Mossi, however, this is not very pronounced.

326 The blacksmiths neither hunt nor fish, but they do engage in gathering activities like other Mossi. They exercise no industries other than those of iron and pottery. They do not work copper, silver, or gold. They do not work as weavers, either. They entrust their wives with the task of gathering and spinning whatever cotton they grow, and then they hand it over to the weavers.

326 438 They do undertake a little trading, slightly more in fact than the average Mossi. When a blacksmith has smelted a large quantity of iron, he sometimes purchases some livestock, leads it to Ouanké, buys kola nuts which he takes to Saraféré, and brings back salt from that locality. This is not done very frequently, however.

326 In short, the blacksmith's profession is of greater consequence to him than anything else, although he avails himself of several other occupations.

[564] Mossi blacksmiths do not form a caste. That is to say, anyone can marry among them.

306 Let us proceed to the jewelers or copper workers (niaka in Mossi).

439 The Mossi have been familiar with copper for a long time, although West Africa does not produce it. The Yarsé have sought it at Ouanké, Kintampo, and even Kumasi from times immemorial. It comes from the coastal area, where it is brought by the Whites in the form of brass rods 30 or 40 centimeters long (like curtain rods). Nowadays, it is the British who supply the Gold Coast with copper, no doubt in the wake of the Portuguese and Dutch.

306 301 The niaka earns more money than the blacksmith. He buys the copper rods from the Dioula and makes them into various items /517/ such as women's copper leggings adorned with crocodiles, and thick copper bracelets worn at the wrists and ankles by women and soroné (pages). [435] Depending on their thickness, these bracelets sell for 2,500 to 20,000 cowries. He also makes women's copper hairpins, and low-price rings worth from 100 to 200 cowries.

306 532 Prior to the arrival of the French, these jewelers also made copper objects depicting everyday scenes, landscapes, huts. The chiefs bought them, but now these objects, at least the more ancient ones, have become very difficult to obtain. It seems that the German physician Frobenius, when he passed through Mossi territory at the end of 1908, acquired some very beautiful specimens of ancient Mossi manufacture for an exorbitant price. Nowadays, one [439] can imagine what the old industry was like by looking at the small items made at Ouagadougou by a few Europeanized Mossi who sell them on the spot for the benefit of local Whites. It might almost be said, therefore, that they manufacture them for export purposes. These items, made by the lost-wax process, are rather interesting and quite artistic for Blacks.

325 306 413 The tools of the niaka are about the same as those of the blacksmith:

1. The small portable anvil or kissiguiré.
2. The hammer or kouadara.
3. Shears (niougou) to pick copper pieces from the fire.

325 4. The iron rasp or sodara.
306 5. The sharpening tool or karé.
413 6. The iron wedge to cut copper (kétouga).
7. Shears to cut copper (mankasaga).
8. A few very primitive goatskin bellows.

306 As an example of a jeweler, may I present Sulémani Déréma, an inhabitant of Ouagadougou. He lives with his older brother, who is the head of the soukala and who has a wife and child. Sulémani himself has two wives and two children. A younger brother lives with them with his wife and child. Finally, there are other
[592] brothers in the soukala but they are not married (let us note in passing that this soukala is exceptional, for the general rule among the /518/ Mossi is for every household to live separately; here, although they still live together, every household works separately).

Sulémani Déréma buys his copper at market, or else he works the copper furnished by his customers to order. He makes bracelets, rings, copper stirrups, etc.

306 He also works in the fields during the winter season, and like
241 the other households in the soukala, he does this on his own. Sulémani has two fields in the bush, one of small millet and another of large white millet, and in addition he grows maize around the soukala on the stretch of ground allotted him by the head of the soukala.

He owns neither large nor small livestock, not even chickens, He neither hunts nor fishes.

His jeweler's trade nets him more than his fields.

324 The blacksmith and niaka are representatives of metalworking.
316 Let us now proceed to stonework.

The makers of crushing-stones are called nanlora in Mossi, from nan, "crushing stone" and lora, "to shatter."

Our quarrymen look in the bush for large stone slabs resting on the ground, and whenever possible raised in some manner above it. They draw lines on these large flat stones with karité and soumbara, the size of the crushing stones they wish to extract, and then they gather wood under the slab and set it afire. They allow the fire

324 316 to burn for one day. Then, with the aid of a large, sharp stone, they strike the spots where the lines were drawn. The stone breaks at those spots, and they take the pieces and sell them at Mossi markets.

This thankless trade does not pay much, and those who exercise it do so only during the dry season. During the winter season they work in the fields, and this brings them much larger returns than their quarrymen's trade.

323 After stonework comes work with earth. It is represented among the Mossi by the potter, the pipe maker, and the bricklayer. Let us begin with the first.

/519/ Here and there among the Mossi, pottery has remained a family occupation performed by all the women. This might be called the initial level of the craft. Yet we saw earlier that the wives of those blacksmiths who live in /special/ quarters or villages make pottery in abundance. This is the second level of the craft, that of incipient specialization. Finally, there are professional potters to be found among the Mossi, and this is the third level of the craft, that of more pronounced specialization. There would remain a fourth level to attain, where potters would exercise this trade exclusively and would be completely specialized. This level, however, has not been reached among the Mossi. The potters here are potters only halfway, and they work as much in the fields as they do at their craft. We have here, nevertheless, an initial effort toward clay-work specialization, and this is by no means the case in every Black population.

As an example, here is a potter from Dassasogo, a small village located 8 kilometers from Ouagadougou.

During the rainy season, he works only in the fields. He exercises his potter's trade only during the dry season. His fields bring him the larger returns.

He has a field of small millet in the bush, and he grows maize around his soukala which consists of two huts only. He has a wife and a young child. His work tools are as follows:

323 413 1. A kind of crude basin, very thick, heavy brimmed, quite shallow, and made of earth.

413 323 [517] In order to make this basin the potter takes a kind of earth called yaoré (the kind from large brown or greyish termite nests). He mixes it with straw and makes this kind of basin, this kind of primitive potter's wheel, called tébélé in Mossi.

2. A kind of short earth pestle, which is held in the fist and called toudoubila.

323 [428] In order to make his canari our potter takes some yarado. To obtain this kind of clay one must dig at certain spots which are handed down traditionally from father to son. He crushes it with /520/ his pestle in the basin, and then wets it and builds his canari with it, raising the canari like a house wall and making it revolve slowly before him. Incidentally, he only knows how to make small canari.

Those potters who make big jars excavate a sort of large basin in the ground. They use the same short and compact little pestle to work the clay of the canari they are building, but they use a different kind of yarado, the red or reddish kind.

[435] Our potter sells his small canari for 80 to 120 cowries apiece. He makes them in quantities. People come to him to purchase them, or else he has his wife take them to market.

Skillful potters make four canari a day. Beginners only make two or three.

[435] Large canari are worth 300 cowries apiece.

Those potters who make small canari often make nothing else. Similarly, those who make large canari do not usually make any others. There are some potters who make both kinds, however, for example at Kombisiguiri.

In order to fire the pots, Mossi potters have large round ovens which I have already described. They are completely open at the top, like circular walls 1.50 meters high, with four holes at the bottom. The potters heap up millet stalks within, and lay four canari on top. Upon each of these canari they place others, until the pile reaches the top of the wall. Then they set the millet stalks afire and allow everything to cool off until the following morning.

323 467 Every potter does not have his own oven. There is only one oven per quarter. The potters in each quarter get together to build a common oven behind the several soukala. If there are five potters,

323 467 the oven is built in one day. All those who cooperated in building it have the right to use it.

323 At Kombisiguiri, some potters have no ovens. They merely spread out millet stalks on the ground and place the canari on top. They light the millet, and the pots are fired in this fashion.

/521/ It is the potter himself who makes his tools, his crude basin, and his pestle.

Let us point out that the baouré, huge jars where the threshed millet is stored and which are about 2.50 meters high and proportionately wide, which look like enormous sandstone ink bottles and which I saw in the northern part of Mossi territory, are not made by the potters. They are built in each soukala by the inhabitants.

After the potters come the pipe makers. It is the old women who make pipes among the Mossi. They fetch the appropriate clay, [435] fashion the bowl of the pipe, and fire it. They sell it for 5 cowries.

333 Let us not forget the bricklayers, who are called tamméténba in Mossi. Like Gourounsi bricklayers, Mossi ones are primarily cultivators, and their fields net them much more than their trade. As among the Gourounsi, the bricklayers are not paid. They are merely fed for the duration of their work.

322 Following work with earth and clay, let us proceed to woodworking. It is represented among the Mossi by the koukoupersêba and séta.

Among certain populations of West Africa, the woodworker's trade is exercised by the blacksmiths (for example, among the Malinké, Dialonké, etc.). Among the Mossi, as among the Gourounsi, it is sharply distinct from the blacksmith's trade and exercised by the koukoupersêba, who are counterparts of the Gourounsi voguésara and Mandé debakala-lésemba. The koukoupersêba make daba handles, axe handles, small chairs which are very nicely tooled with a hot iron and which represent a horse's back with two crude heads, two outlines of a head, on either side.

Actually, the koukoupersêba are primarily cultivators. They work the soil during the rainy season. During the dry season, they make the various items just mentioned.

322 563 In addition to these people, there are the Laobé among the Mossi, that is to say, /522/ those men who are employed by the

322 Foulbé as makers of wooden gourds and other items of a similar
563 nature. The Mossi call them séta. Since there are many Foulbé in Mossi territory, there are Laobé also. Some of them have left their masters to settle independently, and they are now free.

May we present one, by the name of Louri. During the winter season he works the soil, although very slightly like all other Laobé and Foulbé, and he also makes wooden gourds. During the dry season, he only makes gourds. Owing to his very mediocre cultivating abilities, his trade nets him more than his fields.

322 His tools are as follows:

413 1. First, a large ax called diendé, which he uses to cut heavy timber.

2. The saotaré, a kind of well-sharpened hoe with a very short handle, which is used to fashion the gourd on the outside.

3. The tépotondé, a kind of hoe with a very short handle and a very sharp blade, which is used to hollow out the gourd.

4. The menkéré, which is also used to hollow out the inside of the gourd.

5. The kéfirga, a long-handled tool with a curved, sharp blade, which is used for the same purpose as the two preceding tools.

322 It is the blacksmith who makes the iron parts of these tools.

563 Their value is as follows:

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The axe is worth	2,000 cowries
The saotaré is worth	500 "
The tépotondé is worth	500 "
The menkéré is worth	1,500 "
The kéfirga is worth	200 "

322 In order to make his gourds, our Laobé uses the wood of the
563 following trees: hèdè, bouagaï, saboutoungaï, and bembé.

This Laobé comes from Badongo (a village located 31 kilometers from /523/ Ouagadougou). He has a wife and two children.
[561] He is a former slave, a captive from Laobé, whose masters had settled at Badongo. The master left, and now he is free. Formerly he worked for his master, and now he works for himself. He makes gourds in advance and has them sold at market by his wife. He
[435] sells the small ones for 100 cowries, the medium ones for 300, the large ones for 500 (0.10, 0.30, 0.50 franc).

322 As for plots, he cultivates a field of small millet, a little
563 maize around his hut, a few peanuts and underground peas.

His soukala consists of a single and lone hut where he lives with his wife and two children.

Here is another example of a Laobé or séta, this one living at Kombisiguiri. He has left the Foulbé to settle among the Mossi.

[413] His woodworking tools are the same as those we mentioned above: diendé, tépotondé, menkéré, saotaré, and kéfirga.

To make his gourds, he cuts down a whole tree, either hèdè
[313] or n'kouna, which yields the best wood, or bembé, sibi, or n'pékou, or else saboutoungaĭ, sanktougaĭ, or satantoulougaĭ, or finally bouagaĭ, which is less good. Gourds made of hèdè wood sell for more than others.

[435] He makes two kinds of gourds, small ones worth 50 cowries and large ones, some of which sell for up to 1,000 cowries. He makes his gourds without waiting for an order and has them taken to market by his wives.

Our Laobé does not work in the fields at all. From one end of the year to another, he makes his wooden gourds and they bring him enough to live on.

322 In addition, he makes mortars and pestles to crush grain. A
563 small mortar and pestle is worth 1,000 cowries, a large mortar
435 and pestle 2,000. He also makes large wooden spoons which he sells for 50 cowries, and clogs or wooden sandals of a sort which are worn during the rainy season and which he sells for 100 cowries.

/524/ There are eight people in his soukala, himself, his two wives, and his five children.

322 Let us add that a few, a very few, Mossi have begun to make wooden gourds like the Laobé, but contrary to the habits of the latter, they spend more time in the fields than at their trade. There are a few at Polsogo, a village located 12 kilometers from Ouagadougou. They must not be confused with the koukouperséba mentioned above.

There are also bow makers among the Mossi. They are called tempéséda. They are primarily cultivators, and their fields net them much more than their trade. They exercise the latter only for the purpose of getting a few cowries to buy condiments such as

322 [435] salt, etc. Small bows are worth 20 cowries, medium ones 70, and large ones 100.

285 We have just reviewed woodworking. Let us proceed to basketry. Here the latter gives rise to two major trades, the basket maker's and the hat maker's. Let us study them in turn.

As an example, here is Niandé Zango, a basket maker and head of a soukala. He has two wives and three children. His soukala numbers five huts.

He works in the fields during the winter season, and at his trade during the dry season. His fields bring him the larger returns.

He makes his baskets at home without waiting for an order, and he has his wives sell them at market.

He gets doudouma straw in the bush and cultivates mono in his maize field.

[314] Doudouma is a tall grass that is left to dry and that furnishes excellent straw for the manufacture of baskets and trays.

Doudoumidou is doudouma straw dyed red with mono.

249 386 285 Mono (faraoro in Bambara) is a plant grown by the Mossi in their maize fields, around the soukala. It looks a great deal like large red millet, but it is /525/ not the same thing. It is probably a variety of large millet, however. Mono is sown along with maize when the first rains begin to fall. Holes are made with the koutiaga, mono grains placed within and covered up. When mono has emerged from the ground, the weeds are pulled out. The harvesting is done about two and a half months after sowing. The stalks are severed at the base and left to dry in the sun, and then the sheaths and culms are torn off. The latter are the parts used to dye the straw red.

The sheaths and culms are crushed by rubbing them by hand in a canari full of water. Then the doudouma straw is left to soak in this canari. The canari is placed on the fire, where it is kept for six hours. When this is over, the straw, now dyed red, is removed.

386 285 Doudousabalé is doudouma straw dyed black by immersion in béredo. The straw is gathered, taken to a watercourse, and buried in béredo. It is left there for a whole day, and this gives it a shiny grey hue.

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Gansacé is a gramineous plant that grows wild along the banks of watercourses. The natives do not cultivate it. Dried gansacé provides a kind of straw that is used in the manufacture of straw trays. The Foulbé settled in the area also use it in the manufacture of hats.

Boulouvaka is a shrub that grows along watercourses. The boulouvaka stem is sectioned in two or four, yielding small flexible twigs that are dyed black by immersion in bérédo. Once dyed, these twigs are used in the manufacture of Mossi baskets.

Koué is a tall gramineous plant that provides straw used in the manufacture of certain baskets. Koué grows wild all over the bush, in dry spots as well as watered areas.

Dana is a shrub the wood of which is used in the manufacture of the Mossi baskets made of koué straw. It grows everywhere in the bush.

Sepso, semso, semsoro or semsogo is the Mossi name for the bark filaments taken from the néré pods. /526/ They are used in making straw trays. Sepso may be dyed red with mono, or black with bérédo.

All these elements are used by basket makers in the manufacture of their baskets and straw trays.

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Now, here are some samples of Mossi basketry:

1. Large yellow baskets made of koué straw. The rims are made of dana stalks. These baskets are sold at local markets for 250 cowries apiece. They are crude baskets used to carry millet or to bring it to horses. They are quadrangular and shaped like upside-down pyramids sectioned at the base.

2. Large deluxe baskets shaped like the above but distinct in that instead of being solid yellow, straw-yellow, they are multicolored. They are made of koué straw (yellow), doudoumidou straw (red), and boulouvaka straw (black). They are worth about 1,500 cowries apiece.

3. Straw trays, straw dishes of a sort, made with doudouma (yellow) and doudoumidou (red). They sell for 250 cowries when small, 300 when large.

4. Ordinary straw dishes made with doudouma only (undyed straw). They are worth 150 cowries.

285 435 5. Straw dishes made with doudouma (yellow), doudoumidou (red), and doudousabalé (shiny grey). They are worth 300 cowries.

6. Dishes made of gansacé straw (yellow) and doudoumidou straw (red) worth 250 cowries.

7. Dishes made of gansacé and sepso straw (sepso is dyed red with mono). The larger ones are worth 350 cowries, the smaller ones 250.

There are no basket makers at Ouagadougou proper, but there are many people in neighboring villages who work at this trade.

The basket maker's only tool is the lépéré-pime, a thick iron needle hooked at the head and adorned with small stripes, /527/ which serves to stitch the straw used for baskets and trays. The lépéré-pime is made by the blacksmith, and it is worth 50 cowries.

Gansacé is also used in the manufacture of bracelets, cords, and lids.

285 294 The maker of straw hats must be included with the basket maker. Both trades belong together.

To present one of them, here is Tenda Ouidiraogo, a Mossi. He tills the soil during the rainy season, and he makes straw hats during the dry season.

Hats are made with kansé, a gramineous plant that grows along watercourses and ponds.

283 285 294 This grass is made into string. First it is placed in water to be softened, and then it is sectioned into two sprigs which are also immersed in water. They are rubbed and twisted by hand upon the thigh. The two sprigs coil together and make string that is fairly strong, although breakable by hand.

First, enough of this string is prepared for the manufacture of a hat.

285 294 The hat makers have a sort of block called dogoma, made of a tripod stick with a vertical stem. They use it to make their hats, which are the ordinary pointed straw hats common to all of West Africa, and which are found in the Sudan as well as in Guinea. These hats come way down on the back of the neck and make their wearers look like Calabrian bandits. It must be said, however, that among the Mossi there is another type of straw hat, which is swollen, rounded, and partly covered with leather patches. It is

285 294 closer to our European hats and vaguely recalls a very fat and swollen straw bowler with wide rims.

In order to make the former kind, our hat maker begins by bringing together a hundred strings. He ties them at one end, an end left in its original straw state, and thus fashions the tip of the hat. Then he interlaces these strings by hand with bits of unmodified kansé straw. The strings hang vertically, the straw pieces are interlaced horizontally, and this makes up the web of the hat.

[386] /528/ The bits of kansé are often dyed black beforehand by immersion in the mud of a watercourse. This is how black lines and designs are obtained in certain parts of the hat.

[435] Six days are needed to make a hat. It is sold for 1,000 cowries, of course without the ornaments, straps, and strips of leather that will be added by the shoemaker.

Hat makers fashion these hats in advance and have their wives well them at market.

248 Bérenga or hemp (also called tamora among the Mossi) goes into the manufacture of straw hats as well. We saw above, when discussing cultivation, how bérenga is grown. It is sown either among maize or among large red millet, that is to say around the soukala, or even in fields in the bush among small millet or large white millet. If sown among maize, it is sown three days afterwards; if among large red millet, four days later; if among large white millet, ten days later; and if among small millet, ten or twelve days afterward.

Bérenga is harvested ten or twenty days after maize, if it stands in a maize field. If it has been sown among millet, it is harvested seven days afterwards. Bérenga stalks are severed at the base, and the fibrous bark is removed and dried. Bérenga is green when fresh and reddish brown when dry. It is usually made into strings and cords. It is also used for the thatch roofing of huts. When it is to go into 285 294 the making of a hat, it is dyed black by immersion in bérédo and used along with kansé to furnish the black lines of the hats.

Here are some sample products of the Mossi hat-making industry:

1. Pointed straw hats made of kansé (yellow) and bérenga (black). They sport leather ornaments and straps added by the [435] shoemaker. They are worth 2,500 cowries.

285 294 435 2. Similar but smaller hats, worth from 1,000 to 1,500 cowries.

/529/ 3. Round straw hats with wide brims, mentioned above. These are worth 1,700 cowries.

285 All the leather parts on those hats are added by the shoemaker.

294 241 We have already mentioned that our hat makers are not exclusively manufacturers, that they also till the soil. It must be added that the latter activity nets them more than their trade. The man I mentioned cultivates a field of small millet and one of large red millet in the bush. He also grows maize, peanuts, and underground peas around his *soukala*. He owns neither large nor small livestock, but only chickens.

285 294 592 In his *soukala* he has two wives, four children, two married brothers who have one wife apiece but no children, and two unmarried brothers, as well as a father. They all make hats.

He lives at Saponé, where there are many hat manufacturers.

282 After straw work, let us mention leatherwork.

294 [564] Mossi shoemakers do not form a caste. Anyone who wants to may marry among them, and anyone who wishes to do so may exercise their trade.

[592] As an example, here is Kinoga Kologo, a Mossi, and the head of a *soukala*. He lives with two wives, two children, and an unmarried brother. His *soukala* consists of three huts.

His tools are as follows:

282 294 1. The *pongo*, a kind of broad little knife with a flaring blade hafted to a very short handle. It is used to cut hide.

413 2. The *gansiouba*, a wooden knife used to scrape and rub hides, clean them and smooth them.

3. The *désara*, a small tool with a wooden handle and a curved iron stem. It is used red hot to trace designs on hides.

4. The *pime*, a small awl used to sew hides.

5. The large *tirisiga*. This is an iron seal used to imprint hides with small circles.

6. The small *tirisiga*. This is a smaller seal, /530/ an iron rod whose tip makes a very tiny seal.

282 294 435 As among nearly all Blacks, the Mossi shoemaker is his own tanner. He buys sheepskins and goatskins at market (small ones

282 sell for 200 cowries, large ones for 400). He leaves them to soak 294 in a large canari with yogré seeds for twelve hours. Then he re- 435 moves the hair by hand, washes the skin thoroughly, and places it again in a canari with seeds of pélanaga (a tree that grows in the bush). He washes and rubs the hide with these seeds. Then he leaves it to dry in the sun after covering it with butter, real butter rather than karité butter. The skin may then be used to make various items.

Kinoga also buys cowhide at market to make sandals. One cowhide is worth 3,000 cowries. He puts it in a large canari where he leaves it soaking for three days, then he takes it out, removes the hair with a knife, and strikes the skin with a small stick to soften it. Whatever amount of leather is needed to make sandals is then removed from the hide, which is used up gradually as the need arises.

The shoemaker's tools are made by the blacksmith. These tools are worth 100 cowries apiece, except for the awl that is worth 20 and the wooden knife that is made by the shoemaker himself and worth 50. All of the shoemaker's tools taken together are thus worth 470 cowries, or only 50 centimes.

Our shoemaker makes the following items:

1. Sandals, first and foremost. The most expensive ones are worth 2,500 cowries a pair, the less expensive ones 1,500 cowries.

2. Leather grigris, bracelets, pouches, etc. The pouches are worth 100 cowries, the bracelets 50. He only makes them on order. It must be said that other shoemakers stock them up beforehand and have them taken to market.

Of course, what the shoemaker prepares is the physical part of the grigri, its outer covering. It is not he who gives the grigri its power, its soul.

3. Kinoga does not make satchels, goatskin bags, but other shoemakers do.

[415] /531/ There are goatskins used to store millet. Large ones are worth 1 franc and small ones 0.50 franc. Then, there are goatskins used to hold water. They are worth from 0.30 to 1 franc. Finally, there are small goatskins used as purses or coin bags and worth 0.20 franc.

[372] 4. Shoemakers also make leather cases for strike-a-light steel (200 cowries) and for needles (50 cowries). Both strike-a-light steel [326] and needles are made by blacksmiths.

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294 and needles are made by blacksmiths. A strike-a-light steel is
435 worth 200 cowries.

5. They make sheaths for knives and swords. Knife sheaths are worth 200 cowries, sword sheaths 3,000.

6. Bridles and saddles. Saddles are worth 3,000 cowries, bridles 5,000.

Shoemakers also work with deerskin and leopardskin. They adorn Mossi truncheons or clubs with leopardskin. They also adorn spears with it. The leopardskin is provided by the customer. The shoemaker does not purchase it directly.

Leopardskin is sold at market in small pieces worth 100 cowries. A large leopardskin is worth 10 francs, a small one 7 francs.

Crocodile skin is also used by shoemakers. People who have killed a crocodile go and sell its skin at market, or else someone purchases the skin from the hunter and retails it at market. The skin of a small crocodile (hardly any but these are to be found in Mossi territory, owing to the scarcity of water) is worth 1,000 cowries. People who wish the shoemaker to work one of these skins purchase it at market and take it to him.

282 There are no hippopotamus skins in Mossi territory, because
294 water is scarce and watercourses are small. As for elephant skin, it is too tough to be worked and remains unused.

282 The shoemaker I am describing exercises his trade only during
294 the dry season. During the rainy season he tills the soil, and this
241 nets him more than his trade. /532/ The same thing applies, incidentally, to all Mossi shoemakers. During the winter season, our man cultivates a field of small millet and one of large red millet, a small rice field, and a little maize around his soukala. He plants beans in his two millet fields. He owns neither large nor small livestock, not even a chicken or a dog.

There are no makers of headcrests among the Mossi, and the Boussouma chief I questioned about it told me there never were any.

286 Let us now proceed to the cotton industry, and study in turn the weaver's, tailor's and dyer's trades.

The Mossi weaver (soulouga) is a weaver-cultivator. He tills the soil during the rainy season and exercises his trade during the dry season. In fact he is primarily a cultivator, for cultivation rather than weaving comes first and foremost to him.

286 There may be five weaver-cultivators in a small village, or fifteen in a large one.

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283 Customers bring the weaver the cotton thread spun by their wives, for spinning is a family affair. The women spread out the tufts of raw cotton on a small board and extract the seeds by pressing upon them. Then they spin small quantities of cotton between their fingers and thus make it into threads which they coil around a twig. The threads are handed to the weaver in this form.

286 The weaver uncoils the threads and sets them on his loom, which is very primitive. It is the same one used throughout West Africa, and it is called *niri* in Mossi. The cotton strips are usually from 8 to 10 centimeters wide. Their length, which is quite variable, may reach 50 meters. The weaver makes his loom himself.

Let us present an Ouagadougou weaver, Beïdou Ninkéma, the head of a *soukala*. He has two wives and no children. He tills the soil during the rainy season and weaves during the dry season. His fields net him more than his trade, because the Yarsé also work at the weaver's trade, and since they are more skillful at it than the Mossi their competition is formidable. /533/ The customers bring him thread, and he makes it into cotton strips. He is paid 500 [435] cowries to make the strips needed for a skirt. Sixty strips are needed to make one skirt.

[294] Our weaver is also a tailor, but only on occasion, and incidentally a tailor of the lowest order for he can only make skirts and cloaks. [435] He cannot make trousers. He makes a cloak for 0.50 franc, a skirt for 0.20 franc, with the fabric supplied, of course.

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857 Let us add that child-weavers are also to be found among the Mossi. They make *pétala*.

291 "*Pétala*," says the *Cahier des Rapports* of the circle /of Ouagadougou/, "are small, very narrow strips, from 10 to 25 millimeters wide, made of multicolored threads, yellow, red, blue, green, etc., dyed in the territory and woven by children on simplified looms.

"Those strips, which are very strong, are used as trouser belts.

[435] "*Pétala* is worth a little under 0.10 franc a meter, and its sale nets a small profit to the children who make it and who sell it themselves on Mossi markets.

286 291 "This kind of braiding is not exported."

294 563 There are tailors as well as weavers among the Mossi. The tailor's trade, incidentally, is exercised in Mossi lands not only by the Mossi but also by the Yarsé and by some of the Haoussa who are settled in the territory.

294 Mossi tailors till the soil during the winter season and work as tailors during the dry season. Their fields net them more than their trade.

Most Mossi tailors do custom work. Cotton strips are brought to them, and they sew them into the required garment. Others purchase cotton strips, make them into various garments (skirts, cloaks, trousers, caps) and have their wives sell them at market. Those, however, are in the minority.

A cloak is called fougou in Mossi, a skirt fougoupoko from poko, "woman" and fougou, "cloak." Trousers are called koulouga.

/534/ Let us add that garment manufacture has remained a family industry in much of Mossi territory. Many Mossi can sew, and they make their own clothes by sewing up cotton strips. Let [462] us note here that as in nearly all of West Africa, it is the men who sew rather than the women. In this area of Africa, indeed, sewing is essentially a male occupation rather than a female one.

Now to present a Ouagadougou tailor, Mohammadi Bagaré.

He tills the soil and does nothing else during the winter season. He exercises his tailor's trade during the dry season.

He does custom work. Those who want a garment bring him cotton strips in sufficient numbers, and he makes the requested garment. [435] He asks 1,000 cowries to make a large cloak, 500 for a small one, 200 for a skirt. To make a cap he asks only for one kola nut, which is worth 50 cowries at Ouagadougou. He takes 200 cowries for a pair of trousers.

It takes him five days' work to make a large cloak, two days for a small one, one day for a skirt, two days for a pair of trousers, one hour for a cap.

[442 439] His only working tool is the needle. Mohammadi uses European needles.

386 There are dyers as well as weavers and tailors among the Mossi.

177 "Dyer" is *garalosadaba* in Mossi, from *gara*, "indigo" and *sadaba*, "maker." There are no dyers in the southern part of Mossi territory but only in the north, from Ouagadougou upward. This would tend to prove that just as the Mossi probably learned cotton weaving from the Yarsé, they must have learned the dyer's craft from the Songhay, with whom they have had contact toward the north. Actually, Songhay emigrants have established villages in the northern part of the Ouagadougou circle, and *the dyer's craft is their chief industry*. This strongly corroborates our theory. Let us add that /535/ the Mossi practice dyeing in certain places, at certain spots, so to speak. One may not find a single dyer in a large number of Mossi villages, and then all at once come upon a locality with thirty dyers' wells, such as Yakki for example.

386 249 [435] To present a Ouagadougou dyer, here is a Mossi by the name of Gomdounguiba Nangakoré. He does not himself cultivate indigo. He buys it at market in loaves or balls. Anyone may grow indigo among the Mossi (see the section on cultivation above). When it is ripe, the leaves are gathered, heaped in a wooden gourd, and pressed to make loaves worth 50, 100, or 500 cowries. The dyer buys the loaves at market.

386 He dyes either cotton threads or strips, or even garments (cloaks, etc.). The item to be dyed is brought to him. In short, he usually does custom work.

Sometimes, nevertheless, he buys thread, strips, cloaks, or skirts, dyes them, and has them sold at market by his wife or wives.

Every dyer sinks a dyeing well outside, but right beside, his *soukala*. He makes a neatly squared hole, quadrangular, about 60 centimeters long by 60 wide and 1 meter deep. This hole is tamped carefully several times, and the clay walls are polished with water prepared with *néré* bark. Finally, water is poured in to see whether it is watertight. About three days are needed to make one of those wells. Every dyer has one.

In order to dye thread, strips or garments, millet-stalk ashes are placed in water, strained, and tossed to the bottom of the dyeing hole. Then come the ashes of a tree called *gouara* by the Mossi (the ashes themselves are called *zato* or *iato*). They are laid

386 at the bottom of the hole. A loaf of indigo is added, and then water. The ingredients are left to blend for three days, and then the thread, strips, etc., may be immersed.

The coloring mixture is replaced every twenty days. It leaves at the bottom of the dyeing well a sort of yellow-grey crust which is removed and allowed to dry in the sun. Once dry, it /536/ is reduced to powder and added to the next mixture.

Cotton threads, in order to be dyed, are immersed in the mixture and crumpled with the fingers. At nighttime they are removed and left to dry on the hut roof. The dyeing is resumed on the morrow. At the end of three days, the threads are black. Only two days are needed to obtain dark-blue threads, and one day is sufficient for light-blue threads. The same applies to cotton strips and garments.

Our dyer does not exercise his trade during the winter season. At that time, he undertakes nothing but cultivation. It is during the dry season that he is a dyer. He claims, however, that his trade nets him more than his fields.

386 To dye cotton threads he asks 200 cowries to dye a bundle black,
435 from 60 to 100 to dye it dark blue, or 50 cowries to dye it light blue.

When he buys a cloak to dye it (he buys it for 1,500 cowries, for example) he resells it dyed black for 3,000 cowries, dark blue for 2,000, or light blue for 1,700.

286 Mossi fabrics are as follows:

435 1. White or off-white fabric, undyed. It is called *pempéla*. It is worth 25 cowries a cubit, that is, the length from the elbow to the tip of the fingers.

2. The white fabric with blue strips called *nakoré*. It is made of white threads and threads dyed blue. It is worth 50 cowries a cubit.

3. The fabric with small blue and white checks called *arkilla*. It is worth 50 cowries a cubit.

4. The dark-blue fabric with scattered white stripes. It is called *ganga*, and it is worth 50 cowries a cubit.

5. Finally, the blue fabric with blue and white stripes called *oulambala* or *oulambalé*, which costs 75 cowries or one sou and a half a cubit.

000 We are now finished with Mossi industries, not because this work is complete or definitive of course, nor because I have listed and thoroughly studied all this people's trades. I have said enough, however, to draw a significant outline /537/ of these industries and to show that they are flourishing. We may now proceed to trading.

438 Among the Mossi, as everywhere else in West Africa, one must
443 distinguish the internal trade of the territory from its external trade.

As among other Blacks, the internal trade formerly was, and still is, ensured by village markets which are held at the most important localities on set days, for example every three days, every five days, etc. Thus at Ouagadougou, before the arrival of the Whites, the market was held every three days. Now it is a daily affair.

443 At every village where a market was held, there was a "market
782 chief" named by the village chief. The market chief performed a sacrifice for the market. On a large consecrated stone he killed a chicken, a goat, or a sheep which he provided himself.
[776] The animal was offered to the sky divinity (Ounam) to preclude fights on the market place. When this was over, our chief gave a hand to Ounam in his pacifying role, with the aid of a club if necessary.

443 All internal and external products of the territory were retailed at those markets, largely by women whom the Blacks, as we know, are in the habit of sending to market with surplus goods to sell. We shall not dwell on the internal Mossi trade, which is the same as in all black countries, a small retail trade nourished and vitalized by the external trade. Let us, therefore, proceed to the latter.

439 The external Mossi trade is the usual trade of the Sudan, which we have already described and which operates from north to south and south to north. Livestock is led toward the south, kola nuts are brought toward the north, salt is brought back toward the south, etc. We should add to this the cotton strips which constitute one of the important Mossi products (they are made by the Yarsé and by the Mossi themselves, as we saw). Those cotton strips, like livestock, are taken south where cotton is poorly grown.

439 We must add without further delay, however, that it is not the Mossi who do this trading but the Yarsé we know so /538/ well, and the Haoussa settled in Mossi territory. Mossi trade, therefore, is not really Mossi, or at least it was not in the past. If it has now begun to be to some extent, it is thanks to French settlement in the territory.

439 651 After conquering Mossi lands (1896), indeed, we levied a tax on the population. This tax, low at first, rose rapidly over the last few years. In 1906 it amounted to 311,000 francs in the Ouagadougou circle itself, for a population of 861,000 inhabitants. In 1907 it rose to 366,000 francs, in 1909 to 555,000 francs, in 1910 to 656,000 francs. Furthermore, beginning in 1908, it was exacted with so much strictness and on such short notice that it was exactly as though its amount had been increased threefold. Under the circumstances, the Mossi were forced to take to trading in order [436] to secure the French money they did not have, since the local currency is the cowrie and the French administration will not take it. They were forced to go and sell their oxen, even their cows, something the Black will only consent to do when hard pressed and in the direst need. In short, the Mossi now organize small caravans on a village basis. Local young men are sent in groups to Ouanké to [484] sell cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, local horses, and cotton strips. They bring back either French currency or kola nuts. When they bring nuts, they go and sell them at Saraféré or Sofara and get salt or 5-franc pieces. In other words, the Mossi are taking to trade, owing to a pressing need.

439 The Mossi, nevertheless, may hardly be regarded as a trader. He has been one for an extremely short time, and he is not much of a trader yet.

To summarize, there is a strong current of exchange trading in Mossi territory from north to south and south to north. There are also important market towns in the territory, or rather large market villages, as we already know. This exchange trading and those important markets, however, are the creation and achievement of the Yarsé and of a small number of Haoussa. The Mossi themselves, in the past, had no part in all this, except /539/ for the fact that the

M 439 centralized structure of the Mossi empire ensured the necessary safety for exchanges and trade. Nowadays they still have a very small part in it, and only when forced and pressed by the need to pay taxes.

M 439 183 To corroborate this Mossi incapacity for trade, I need only select from my field notes of December, 1908. Here is a significant one concerning a Mossi village in the northern part of the /Ouagadougou/ circle, "No trade in this village. It is the Yarsé from Téma who come and buy the cotton bands dyed blue and sell them at Salaga (Gold Coast). Our Mossi would profit by doing this themselves. They agree but nevertheless fail to do it, saying that their forebears did not do it either. They do no trading, therefore." In another village, Yakki, where industries flourish, I made the following note, "Trade, on the other hand, is nil, as among all Mossi."

M H 441 439 I stated above that higher trade among the Mossi was confined to a few Haoussa colonies. Concerning this, and in order to give an idea of this trading, I shall record here a short profile of a Haoussa trader from Ouagadougou, Maïguisiri Dangaori, who has been there for fifteen years although his family lives at Iko in Haoussa territory.

He has no fields, of course. He does nothing but trade.

He buys cattle and sheep locally. He takes them to Kumasi on the Gold Coast (this is not usually done by the Yarsé, who do not go so far south). He sells them there, and with the returns he buys kola nuts, European fabrics, glass trinkets, sugar, cast-iron pots, H [482 465] etc. On the way back, he hires needy Haoussa who live on the Gold Coast as bearers and takes them to Ouagadougou. Each bearer is paid 35 francs on arrival for the fifty days of travel. In addition, he feeds them along the way. Their food costs him 300 cowries a day.

He sells the goods he brought back, or rather has them sold at the Ouagadougou market, for he has an employee who /540/ sells for him at market. This employee is not a member of his family. He is a Haoussa, to whom he gives 5 percent of the sales. That is all. Beyond this he gives him nothing, not even food.

Our trader usually waits until everything is sold before returning to the Gold Coast. If the merchandise does not sell quickly enough, he picks up what is left and disposes of it on the way back.

Hausa MS 12

M H 441 439 484 The journey takes six months from the time he leaves Ouagadougou to the time he returns. On his way to the Gold Coast he needs no bearers. He merely takes a Peuhl to herd the cattle, and provides him with food and 300 cowries a day, plus 1 franc on arrival per head of cattle herded.

Our trader stays with another Haoussa from Ouagadougou, another trader of course, who is wealthier than he. He does not pay rent, but offers him gifts from time to time in return for his hospitality.

His family lives at Iko in Haoussa territory, and consists of three wives and three children. He goes and sees them every two years.

M H 441 439 We can see that the Haoussa do their trading in grander and more forceful fashion than the Yarsé. They do not hesitate to expatriate themselves in order to carry out their trade, and in this fashion they have actually colonized southern Nigeria, Dahomey, Togoland, the Gold Coast, Mossi country, etc. Once settled there, they carry their trading operations farther than local merchants, and they hardly do anything else. While the Yarsé is an example of cultivator-trader, the Haoussa of Mossi territory is in most cases an example of pure trader who specializes completely in trading. This is why he towers above the whole trading structure of the country. Bent on gain, a speculator in cowries and French currency, more intelligent than the Mossi and Yarsé, he amasses large fortunes.

M 567 439 In order to be quite thorough on the subject of present and past trading in Mossi territory, it should be added that formerly the slave trade was carried out alongside that in livestock, cotton fabric, kola nut, and salt. The slaves came chiefly from Gourounsi, /541/, Boussansé, and Kipirsi lands. The Djermabé /Zerma?/, especially, sold slaves to the Mossi in very large numbers when they pillaged Gourounsi territory. This trade, like the others, was in the hands of the Yarsé and Haoussa.

M 839 439 304 Let us also add a word about the now-abolished eunuch trade. Formerly, the Mossi furnished some to the Haoussa, who forwarded them to Turkey via Egypt. The operated men were Gourounsi sold to the Mossi by the Zaberma and by their chief Baba-Tô. Some Mossi villages specialized in this kind of work. The village of Koubry,

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304 especially, subsisted upon it. The victims, children from twelve to fifteen years old, were provided by the Moro Naba, who kept them afterward or sold them to the Haoussa.

In 1900 our ambassador to Turkey learned that a shipment of eunuchs which had reached Constantinople had originated in Mossi territory, which we had occupied since 1896. He warned the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who notified his colleague the Minister of the Colonies. Strict orders were issued to put an end to this Mossi industry, which has since ceased to exist.

439 Let us finally add the grain trade, which is unusual in Mossi territory. In the years 1906, 1907, and 1908 which saw poor harvests, however, the Mossi were forced to acquire grain in Yatenga (Ouahigouya circle) and in Gourounsi territory by selling livestock.

We have now concluded our discussion of Mossi occupations. Let us proceed to a study of the family and the superposed social organisms.

Chapter II

The Mossi: The Family, Public Powers, and Religion

593 We must state first that the Mossi family is a partly decommunalized family. This may come as a surprise in view of the foregoing section on work (cultivation predominates, stockbreeding is poor, industries flourish, trade is nonexistent), which had led us to expect something altogether different. Nevertheless, this is a fact.

The family is even highly decommunalized, although not everywhere to the same degree. In this respect, five different family types are to be found.

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326 The first two are quite rare. They would seem to be witnesses to an ancient state of affairs which has now vanished. Thus, one finds the common patriarchal type among those blacksmiths who are gathered into /special/ quarters or even villages and whom we mentioned in the section on industries. This type is found only among them and not among isolated blacksmiths, where only the common Mossi family type occurs.

596 326 Are those blacksmiths who live in groups unaltered remnants of the ancient population as it existed prior to the Dagomba invasion? Are they autochthonous? Should their statement that they are not Mossi be interpreted in this light? This is probable, although by no means certain. In any case, the family among them is of the purest patriarchal cast.

596 326 592 Among them, all households belonging to a family occupy the same soukala. When a young man marries, he remains in the family soukala.

/543/ During the winter season, the occupants of the soukala work in the fields of the head of the soukala from six in the morning until three in the afternoon. From three o'clock on, they till their own little individual plots.

During the dry season, they all work together at the blacksmith's trade with the head of the soukala, and all profits devolve to the latter. They work from sunrise to sunset.

The head of the soukala provides them with food throughout the year. As for their clothing, they procure it themselves with the returns from their little plots. The same applies to bracelets, jewels, etc. (as for grigris, they do not like them).

The head of the soukala buys each man his first wife, and in return gives in marriage all the daughters of the soukala.

596 428 326 When the head of a soukala dies, it is his younger brother who takes command of the soukala. He also takes all the goods, fields, livestock, slaves, cowries, and the tools used to extract and work the iron. The sons get nothing. Everyone remains in the soukala.

When the supply of brothers has been exhausted, the oldest son in the whole soukala receives the inheritance.

If no males remain in the soukala, the sisters come first in line before the daughters if they have the same father and mother as the deceased, but after /them/ if they were born of the same father only. They take half of the movable property and give half to the daughters. They apportion their share evenly among themselves. The soukala and fields go to the village chief. If there are no sisters born of the same father and mother, the inheritance goes to the daughters, and next in line to the sisters born of the same father as the deceased. If there are neither sisters nor daughters, the whole estate goes to the village chief.

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326 As we can see, the common patriarchal family is found among those blacksmiths who live in groups.

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596 The second Mossi family type is one we had occasion to mention here and there in the section on work. Contrary to the first type, which is found only in a special section of the population, this one occurs throughout the Mossi but as a rare /544/ and exceptional case. All the households in the family still live together, but every household works for itself. This is the type we studied among the Nankana and other groups of cultivator-breeders under the name of Nankana type No. 3 /not translated/.

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592 We come now to those Mossi family types which are widespread rather than exceptional. They correspond to the Nankana type No. 4 (every household lives separately and works separately), or rather they depart from it in the direction of even greater decommunalization. There are three variants, namely, one that corresponds to the pure Nankana type No. 4, and two where decommunalization is more accentuated. Let us describe them in turn.

Here is the first variant:

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592 1. The households live separately. As soon as a young man marries, he settles on his own with the help of his family.

596 When a family head gives one of the family's sons a wife, he uses a vacant soukala if there is one available. If there is none, the son builds a new soukala with the help of his father and of the family head.

2. Every household works separately (except for the clearing of family fields), procures its own food, clothing, and subsistence. The married son, however, comes and helps his father a little now and then. During the dry season, for example, he helps him repair the soukala. Or else he offers him small gifts from time to time.

When someone, on marrying, settles separately, the head of the family usually gives him some family field that was once cleared and cultivated and has since lain fallow.

3. Although households work separately, the children of the households are not given in marriage by their father and mother, but by the head of the family. The latter buys wives for the boys,
[583] but he also gives the daughters in marriage and receives the bride price.

584 596 To arrange a marriage, one offers gifts to the girl's family on festive days. The gift grows more sizable from year to year. Finally, at the time of marriage, one offers 25 or 30 francs as a bride price.

Girls are also exchanged among families. /545/ One family may pledge one of its daughters to another family for one of its young men, while the second family provides a girl for a boy of the first family.

Even if a man buys a wife at market and has children by her, it is not he but his family head who gives those children in marriage.

If a young man goes himself to a family head, asks for a wife, and obtains her without any payment, without any bride price, it is the girl's father who disposes of the first daughter born of the union. He is entitled to take her with him as soon as she is no longer at the breast, and he will later give her in marriage. The other children are given in marriage by their father's family head.

596 782 4. The head of the family performs religious sacrifices for the whole family, and acts as its judge.

596 428 5. When a family head dies, the headship of the family goes to his younger brother along with the family property, that is, his soukala if it is a family one (built by the family or with the help of the family), the available family fields, the movable family property (livestock, slaves, cowries, clothing, family jewels, etc.). The movable private property of the deceased, on the other hand (livestock, slaves, cowries, clothing, private jewels, etc.) go to the oldest son along with the fields cultivated by the deceased and by his household, that is, the private property of the deceased. Finally, the soukala, if it was built by the deceased all by himself and without the aid of his family, goes to his oldest son as well since it is private property.

The brother who inherits gives some of the movable family property to the other brothers, but only if he feels like doing so.

Here, family property is by far the most important.

Such is the oldest variant of the Mossi family type that prevails at the present day. Actually, this variant still persists in quite a few Mossi localities.

592 596 Now, here is the second variant:

1. Every household lives separately, works separately (except for the clearing of the family fields), and sees to its own subsistence.

592 596 People who are thus settled on their own work for themselves and no longer for /546/ their father, with whom they lived and for whom they worked prior to marriage. They nevertheless offer gifts to their father from time to time.

592 596 584 2. As far as the marriage of children belonging to those households is concerned, a distinction must be made among the following possibilities. When they are the children of wives bought by the family head, it is the latter who gives them in marriage. When they are the children of wives obtained by the husband himself, it is the latter who gives them in marriage.

Or else a rough compromise is made (in Boussouma province, for example). The first son and first daughter of the union are given in marriage by the family head, while the other children are given in marriage by the household.

596 782 3. It is the head of the family, however, who alone is entitled to offer religious sacrifices for the whole family, and who always acts as its judge.

596 428 4. When the head of the family dies, the headship is transmitted to his younger brother along with the family property. The private property of the deceased goes to all his sons, but the oldest son is favored. This actually constitutes the difference between this family type and the preceding one as far as inheritance is concerned. While in the preceding type the oldest son alone inherited, in this type all sons inherit but the eldest is heavily favored.

Thus, if the soukala was the private property of the deceased, it goes to the eldest son. If he is able to cultivate them all, the latter also keeps all the fields cultivated by the deceased. If he is not able to do so, he gives the surplus to his brothers.

As for livestock, if there are ten head that belonged privately to the deceased, and if there are three sons and two daughters, the oldest son will get four, each other son will get two, and each daughter will get one.

[567] As for slaves, if the situation is the same, the oldest son will take five out of ten, the second son three, the third son two, and the daughters will get none.

Cowries and grain are apportioned in the same manner.

In addition to these shares given to the younger sons and to the daughters, it must be noted that private property has acquired greater

596 significance vis-à-vis family property in this second Mossi family
428 type. /547/ Thus, my informant stresses that here family property still has greater significance than private property, but at the same time he adds that in every inheritance he witnessed, the *soukala always* went to the oldest son, no matter what its origin. He corroborates this with information about his own family, as follows:

He lives, he says, with five wives, two daughters, two unmarried cousins who are the sons of one of his father's brothers, an unmarried cousin who is the son of one of his father's sisters, a nephew who is the son of his own sister, in short, twelve persons including him.

The *soukala* where he lives once belonged to his father and was built by the latter alone. He has thus inherited it, even though his father had a younger brother.

Incidentally, the brother got nothing, since my informant's father left nothing beside the *soukala*, no family property or private worth much.

To whom will the *soukala* go when he dies? Since he has no son, he replies, it will go to his younger brother (he has a younger brother who lives in a separate *soukala*). Supposing he had a son, however? Then it would go to his son.

I counter that it should go to his brother, since he did not build it himself but inherited it from his father (that is, from his own and his brother's common father), in accordance with the rule he mentioned earlier. He nevertheless holds, however, that it is not so, that younger brothers never did inherit a *soukala*, I cannot make him alter his position.

596 This gives us a living example of how the Mossi family has
423 changed. In the old days, family property went along with the
178 family headship to the younger brother. The *soukala*, for example, figured in almost every case among the family property, either because the family had given it ready made to the young man, or simply because the family had helped him build it. A *soukala* was private property only when the young man had built it altogether by himself (a very unusual case). Later, the *soukala* came to be considered private property when it had been built by the young man

596 with the help of his father and family head (which is by far the
423 most frequent occurrence), /548/ while in such a case it had for-
178 merly been considered family property. Finally, the soukala came
to be regarded in every case as personal property and to be transmitted for that reason to the oldest son. This, incidentally, is the same evolution that applied to property in general, as we shall see shortly.

Now, here is the third and last variant of the prevailing Mossi
593 family type. Nowadays, this variant is by far the most widespread.

1. Every household lives separately, works separately, and procures its own food and subsistence. The help of neighbors is enlisted to clear the fields.

2. Every household gives its own children in marriage. The
584 family head no longer does so.

593 As soon as a man has a son, he chooses a little girl who will go to the boy when he reaches puberty. He visits the girl's relatives from time to time and offers them gifts.

584 When the girl is old enough to be married, he takes 50,000
583 cowries (if he is wealthy), skirt cloths, salt, kola nuts, and gives it
593 all to the relatives. Then, the old women in the daughter's family lead her to the home of the betrothed man's relatives. The father kills a sheep, makes a lot of couscous, buys dolo to celebrate her arrival. Then he offers the girl six or seven baskets containing respectively 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 6,000, and 7,000 cowries. The young man himself gives his betrothed four or five skirts. If he is very wealthy, he gives her one or two little girls as slaves.

On the evening when the wedding is celebrated, the father asks
585 one of his neighbors to lend him a hut, and the young married pair
[426] are sent there all alone (they will remain there as long as their soukala is not built). On the morrow, the feasting begins. People dance and feast for seven days at the gates of the father's soukala, at least when the girl is a virgin. If she is not, the feasting is curtailed but nevertheless lasts for another three days.

583 When the father is poor, he offers a few kola nuts to the girl's
591 /549/ father (six or ten). He gives the father and mother some firewood he gathered in the bush, straw to make séko /Tr.: mats/ for door, 2,000 cowries, a skirt cloth. He kills a sheep to make

583 couscous, which he offers to the relatives. Then he takes the girl
591 away. He asks a neighbor for a hut to harbor the young couple on
their wedding night and over the next few weeks. They stay there
for only a month or two, until their soukala is built.

583 The bride price actually varies from region to region among the
Mossi. We have just seen it range from 2,000 to 50,000 cowries. Earlier, we saw it set at 25,000. At Kombisiguiri it amounts to a mere 1,000. The young man's father visits the young girl's father with a chicken and 500 cowries; then he comes to see him a second time, again with a chicken and 500 cowries. There is no other bride price. Those who do not have a chicken to offer replace it with a bundle of firewood or a straw séko. In short, a girl here is worth 30 sous (the two chickens being worth 0.50 franc between them, and the 1,000 cowries amounting to one franc).

591 Among rich people the young couple may remain seven, nine,
or even twelve months in their neighbors' house. They present the
[431] latter with gifts, and during this period of time they proceed to build
a soukala, or rather to have one built. The young man's father
helps his son in this undertaking.

593 The young husband, now settled on his own, will henceforth
work on his own account. He has become in turn the head of a
431 soukala, but if he obtains a lot of millet or other grain he offers
626 gifts to his father. If he becomes wealthy and makes no such gifts,
the neighbors will insult him. He always makes gifts, therefore, for fear of being insulted. A son who marries, as a rule, builds his soukala as near as possible to that of his father.

593 Finally, let us add that the father usually buys his son's kitchen
utensils when the boy settles on his own.

3. When the head of a family dies, the younger brother inevi-
428 tably takes command of the family, but all the property, whatever
593 its nature, goes to the children of the deceased and more especially
to his oldest son. There is no longer any family real estate or movable property, or else nothing is regarded as such any longer.

/550/ The eldest son takes his father's soukala and everything that goes with it, fields, slaves, livestock, father's wives. He shares them, however, with his brothers and even with his sisters.

428 593 As for the soukala itself, he keeps it. He leaves his own soukala, along with everything he owns, to come and live in the soukala of the deceased. In order to put the soukala he is leaving to some use, however, he sends one of his unmarried brothers (that is to say, one who lived up to that time with the deceased) to settle there. He immediately gives this brother one of his father's wives, one of the wives in the estate, and sends him, thus married, to settle in the soukala he is leaving.

593 578 I asked my informant why the father does not keep his oldest married son with him instead of having him build a new soukala on the outside, since the son returns to the paternal soukala anyway when the father dies. The Mossi chief I was questioning replied that if the father kept his oldest son by his side, the latter, when married and growing older, would wish for his father's death in order to become independent. Wishing for his father's death, he might be tempted to bring it about. If settled in his own soukala, on the other hand, the head of a household and independent, he would nurture no ill thoughts against his father.

593 578 644 We shall see later that this feeling of fear and suspicion toward the eldest son is carried to an extreme among the Moro Nabas. This is understandable, since kingship is inherited. Once married, therefore, the eldest son of the prince went far from his father, to a soukala of his own and remained there until the Moro Naba's death.

428 593 As for the father's fields, the eldest son keeps them all if he is able to work them all. If he is not able to do so, he gives the surplus over and above what he can work to his brothers.

As far as livestock is concerned, the eldest son gives some to his younger brothers and even to his sisters.

The same applies to slaves and cowries.

428 593 587 As for wives, if there are many, he gives some to his younger brothers. Thus, for example, if there are ten wives and he has two brothers, he gives two wives to each /551/ brother and keeps six for himself (let us add that the deceased, before dying, often gives a wife to his younger brother or brothers).

428 593 To summarize, the eldest son gets the soukala and the fields. As for movable property, he takes about 50 percent and leaves the other half to the younger sons and to the daughters. There is a sharing, therefore, although a very uneven one.

428 593 184 Actually, those shares vary from region to region among the Mossi. Thus, in certain areas, the oldest son gets the soukala, the fields, two thirds of the livestock, cowries, and money, all the slaves and grain, as well as clothing, jewelry, weapons, horses, etc. The other sons get the remaining goods. The daughters get nothing. As for the wives, the oldest son takes three quarters and the other sons one quarter. In such cases, the eldest son is much more heavily favored than in the cases mentioned earlier.

At Kombisiguiri, this is even more accentuated. The oldest son may keep everything if he wishes. He may also give something to the other sons of the deceased or to the latter's brothers.

In short, at the stage /of evolution/ with which we are dealing, the transmission of property ranges from a complete and absolute law of primogeniture to an uneven sharing heavily tipped toward the eldest son.

593 736 Let us add that when the eldest son receives an estate, if his brothers are not yet of an age to be married, he keeps them at his home, in his own household (this is why, although Mossi households in principle include only a husband, his wives, children, and slaves, sometimes they also contain young unmarried brothers). In the morning they work for him, and in the afternoon they work their own little plots. The older brother provides them with food at all times, but not with clothes. They must procure their clothing with the returns from their own little plots. When they reach marriageable age, the older brother buys them a wife and helps them settle on their own.

429 593 When the head of a soukala dies leaving only small sons, his younger brother takes all the property for the time being but saves it for the legitimate heirs. When the eldest son of the deceased has grown up, the brother leaves the soukala and returns to his own former one, taking only his own belongings. /552/ At that time, all the real estate and movable property devolve to the oldest son and partly to the other sons.

428 593 If the head of a soukala leaves no sons but only brothers and daughters, the inheritance is shared between his younger brother and his daughters. The younger brother takes the soukala, the fields, and the wives. He leaves his own soukala and settles in that of the deceased, where he brings all his belongings. He puts up either a

428 son or a young brother of marriageable age in his former soukala.
593 The daughters, however, get the movable property such as slaves, livestock, grain, cowries, etc. (with the exception of wives).

The oldest daughter takes the largest share. Out of ten beeves she will take six (if there are three daughters, for example) and the two younger daughters will take two each. Out of four slaves she will take two, and the two younger daughters will take one each. Out of 1,000 cowries, the oldest will take 600, the other two 200 each.

The same thing applies if there are no brothers but only daughters and brothers' sons, since the latter have the same rights as their fathers. Thus, it is the eldest son of the younger brother who inherits along with the daughters of the deceased.

593 In this third variant of the Mossi family, in short, the bonds that connect the various households in the family are now of two kinds only:

1. There are the religious bonds, since the head of the entire family remains the high priest of this collectivity.

593
672 2. There are also the judicial bonds (collective responsibility of the family in case of injury done to other people).

"If a man is in debt," says Moulins, p. 34, op. cit. /Monographie du cercle de Ouagadougou/, "his family is held responsible for payment. If he commits a misdemeanor, his family is held responsible for financial reparation.

"If he commits a crime of murder, one of his relatives will be put to death in his place if he has not himself been seized (at least, this is what happened prior to our occupation).

"When the head of the family is served a complaint against one of the individuals under his authority, he appeals first, of course, to the guilty party himself if the latter owns /553/ any property, then to the soukala to which the man belongs, then to the one headed by his nearest relative, etc. Vis-à-vis third parties, however, the family itself, as a whole, is held responsible for reparation.

"The formidable responsibility devolving to the family entails, as its logical counterpart, putting at its disposal, powers sufficient

593 672 to guard against dangers resulting from the obligation to make reparation for injuries committed by one of its members. This has led naturally to a recognition of the family's right, in the person of its head, to take whatever measures are necessary for the preservation of its common interests. Prior to our occupation, such measures could go as far as putting in irons or even putting to death an individual who called upon the collective responsibility of the family too frequently or too onerously, and thus threatened to endanger its equilibrium. [643] The decision of a family head involving the death sentence or putting in irons for life for one of his people, however, only became final with the naba's approval. The latter could oppose it by assuming financial responsibility, in the family's stead, for all future misdemeanors committed by the person he had pardoned."

593 174 We come now to an interesting although extremely ticklish subject, namely, the causes of the partial decommunalization of the Mossi family.

If we look at the present workaday life of these people, their decommunalization seems inexplicable in view of the fact that we are dealing with a group of cultivators, somewhat indolent to be sure, but nevertheless cultivators first and foremost. The Mossi, on the other hand, are not herdsmen. They are very mediocre stockbreeders. Among them as among other Blacks of West Africa, hunting merely accounts for a small percentage of their total food-producing activities. They are not traders, either. We see nothing here, therefore, that might explain the decommunalization of the family, and we must refer back to the previous workaday life of this people. We saw earlier, however, that while the present Mossi population originated /554/ from the fusion of two disparate elements, one of those elements was similar to the Bobo, Gourounsi, Habé, Kipirsi, etc., and thus deeply communal and patriarchal. It is obviously not from this element that the present decommunalization might stem.

Fortunately, there exists another and very different element. The Mossi who came from the Dagomba were, as we know, Blacks who were 1) warriors and conquerors, 2) breeders of horses, no doubt, 593 174 and very probably of large and small livestock as well. In this respect they must have been strikingly similar to the present-day Toucouleur, who conquered part of West Africa in the nineteenth century and who are, like the Foulah of Guinea, half stockbreeders, half cultivators. (We shall review briefly those very Toucouleur in Chapter 4 of this book, to give the reader an idea of the Black conqueror on the active rather than the potential level, in a "pure state" rather than already fused into a heterogeneous conquered population /not translated/). Now war with its attendant loot, like stockbreeding, augments private property and allows individuals and households to secede from the family, at least to the extent permitted by the problems of cultivation and especially of field clearing. It is a fact that among the Toucouleur and Foulah, as among the Dagomba and Mossi, every household lives separately and works separately (except for that most difficult of all tasks to the Blacks, the clearing of fields). Thus, it must be concluded that the decommunalization of the present-day Mossi family derives from the ancient workaday life of the conquering segment of the population, which imposed its own customs on the conquered group. This workaday life consisted half of stockbreeding, half of cultivation as among the present-day Toucouleur and Foulah, with war and looting in addition as among the same groups up to quite recently.

Of course, we learn nothing that might shed light on the subject by questioning the Mossi themselves. My informants, for example, tell me that the various soukala in a family actually constitute but one family. I ask them why, then, do they not live together and do all their tilling together, like /555/ the Bobo, Gourounsi, Bambara, etc.? Because the women quarrel, they tell me. Those quarrels caused other fights among the men, and people ended up living separately. Of course, this could only have been a pretext for secession, and the true cause which made this secession possible, namely, the increasing individual wealth of the households, was something else again.

592 We shall close with a few details concerning the internal structure of the Mossi household. The latter includes, as we have stated above, the following members:

592 1. Husband.
2. Wife or wives.
3. Unmarried children, sons or daughters.
4. Slaves.

Sometimes, it also includes young unmarried brothers (see above).

592 As a rule, every soukala-household has only one large bush
241 field in addition to the garden plot surrounding the soukala (where
461 maize and large red millet are grown during the rainy season,
tobacco and cotton during the dry season).

The head of the household, his unmarried sons and unmarried brothers, work on those fields during the rainy season from six in the morning to three in the afternoon, with a long rest period around noon. The women work there also, but their hours are different owing to their household tasks.

The unmarried sons and brothers also have small individual plots of cotton and large red millet. They work them in the afternoon after three o'clock. During the rainy season, as a rule, there
[527] are no rest days. A few Mossi, however, have adopted the customs
of their Yarsé neighbors and rest on Friday. Others, who are Moslemized, and incidentally very few, rest both on Friday and on Monday.

During the dry season the members of the household repair hut roofs, go hunting, or else participate in the clearing of family fields, etc. In addition to this they work for themselves, as weavers for example. The money earned in this fashion goes to them and not to the soukala head.

592 /556/ It is the head of the soukala-household, the husband and father, who provides all occupants of the soukala with food throughout the year, morning and evening. He also provides clothing for those who cannot provide their own, but those who can do so procure it themselves.

592 We know that it is sometimes the head of the family and some-
584 times the head of the household who gives the children of the house-
464 hold in marriage. It sometimes happens, however, that a son
565 leaves the soukala without his father's permission. He usually does
this in order to win a wife, when the head of the family or the

592 father cannot procure one or delays too long in doing so. The son
584 who secedes in this fashion goes to work for a chief or noble who
464 will later give him a wife as a reward. The first male child and the
565 first female child born of this union, however, will devolve to the
chief or noble who gave the wife. He will use the male child as a servant, and the girl to be handed out as a reward to someone working for him. This is a side effect of the political organization on the family. This secession on the part of sons can only occur, indeed, thanks to the existence of chiefs and nobles in sufficient numbers to permit the secessionists to find work and employment among them without difficulty. Among the Bobo and Nounouma, such a situation could not exist.

Let us note that this institution, while restricting the authority of the family head or household head, has strengthened the power of the Mossi aristocracy.

592 In closing, let us note a few details about the Mossi *soukala*
361 from a physical standpoint. It is a cluster of round huts, about five
or six of them, usually built of red earth with a straw roof and connected to each other by a concave wall made likewise of red earth. The *soukala* is thus fortified, as it were, and sheltered from the outside.

592 The Mossi *soukala* is quite similar to the Malinké or Dialonké
361 "compound" /literally, "square"/, which also consists of a cluster
of clay huts with straw roofs. Among the Malinké and Dialonké,
171 however, the huts are often connected by a palisade or a mere *séko*
instead of a red earth wall as they are here. Another difference is /557/ that the doors of the huts of the Mossi *soukala* are so low that one must often creep in on all fours. Furthermore, there are no porches such as are found among the Malinké and Dialonké. In spite of those differences, however, the Mossi *soukala* bear a general resemblance to the Guinean *soukala*, while they are in no way related to the massive citadels of the Gourounsi and Kipirsi.

The Mossi *soukala*, on the other hand, are set about 50 meters apart. The maize plot surrounding the *soukala* lies directly around it, as among the Bobo, Gourounsi, Kipirsi, etc., while among the Malinké and Dialonké of Guinea the garden plot of each compound is located outside the village boundaries, since the compounds stand

592 only one or two meters apart, close together. It is true that there
361 is sometimes a small plot within the séko....
171 The soukala or compound is called iri in Mossi, the hut rogo or dogo, and the soukala head irisoba (from soba, "chief" and iri, "compound").

462 We shall close this analysis of the Mossi family with a few notes
562 on the status of women and that of slaves.

First of all, Mossi women help with the tilling. They do not clear the fields, it is true, but they participate in all other field tasks along with the men. They do this only in the morning, however, since they spend the afternoon on household tasks or on their little individual plots, for they have small fields of large white millet, underground peas, beans, or peanuts.

They also do household tasks: they pound and crush the grain. Large millet or sorghum is, as we know, pounded first and then crushed, while small millet is crushed after being threshed.

462 The Mossi set their crushing stones in huge round clay /banco/
252 tables which are built outside the soukala and which are used by
412 the whole quarter. This is a strictly Mossi characteristic which is not found among the /558/ Bobo, Gourounsi, etc., in short, among any of the other groups who nevertheless use the same stones. Those large round tables are not high. They are about 1 or 1.20 meters in height and approximately 6 meters in diameter, with a correspondingly large circumference. The Mossi set in their crushing stones all around the circumference, and each table can thus hold ten, twelve, or even more. Every evening at nightfall the women of the soukala which are around it, women, young girls, etc., come together to crush their grain. They are usually in the simplest of garb, bare as the back of my hand, for the work is hard and demands a continuous back-and-forth motion of the arms, the upper part of the body, and the body as a whole.

To make those tables, they first build a circular wall to the desired height of the table, and then the whole inner space is filled up with earth almost to the top. This earth is pounded thoroughly, and then well-tamped casings are fashioned on the horizontal circumference in which are set the stones on which the crushing is done. The stones are firmly ensheathed in the clay, which is then allowed to dry.

462 Those large tables are called niénouga in Mossi, the stones on
252 which the crushing is done are called néré, and the movable stones
442 used for crushing are called nérébila "little néré"/.

171 We stated above that those large clay tables are peculiarly
252 Mossi and are not to be found among the Bobo, Habé, or Gourounsi.
442 Actually the latter, as we saw earlier, set their stones in small clay tables which are only 1 meter high and 1 meter in diameter and thus quite small, and which stand in every soukala inside each woman's room. They also make slightly larger tables, long ones that look like large earthen bathtubs of a sort or that even bear a certain resemblance to crude sarcophagi, and into which the stones are set. Those, too, stand within the soukala, in dark, dirty rooms. Sometimes, the Gourounsi merely set down their crushing stones under a shelter covered with wood and straw, built at the gate of their citadel-soukala. Three or four stones are placed upon two thick and solid parallel sticks which in turn are held /559/ about 50 centimeters from the ground on four solid forks thrust into the ground. In this case the woman must kneel down in order to crush the grain. I have observed this method chiefly among the Menkiéra, that is to say, in the northern part of the Leo residency.

To go back to female work among the Mossi. Along with the
462 crushing of grain, they do the cooking, fetch firewood and water, do the gathering, prepare the products derived from gathering, etc. We saw earlier how those products are made, and we shall not go over it again.

252 Among the Mossi, the only known millet dishes are sarabout
171 and vessala. Couscous is unknown. This is rather strange, since the dish thus called is known practically throughout West Africa.

Sarabout (the Mossi word) is what the Malinké and Bambara call tô, the Foulbé, Toucouleur, and Foulah niri, the Sarakolé souré, the Maure /Moors/ lisi.

As for couscous, the Malinké and Bambara call it baci, the Foulbé, Toucouleur, and Foulah lakiri, the Sarakole fouto, the Moors and Arabs couscous.

To or sarabout is prepared for immediate consumption. Couscous is prepared for relatively long storage.

252 This is how their methods of preparation differ. To make *to* or *sarabout*, one simply leaves the millet flour to cook in boiling water, stirring occasionally with a piece of wood or a spoon. To make *couscous*, on the other hand, one takes a *canari*, fills it with water, sets it to boil on the fire, and then puts the millet into a gourd which is perforated at the bottom and thus makes a sort of strainer. This gourd is placed over the *canari* where the water is boiling, and covered with a straw dish. The steam emanating from the *canari* comes through the holes into the gourd, and since the latter is covered the steam remains there a long time. The millet flour is thus cooked by steaming. At the end of a period of time, the gourd is removed and its contents are left to cool and to dry in the sun. Once the millet flour has thus been cooked and dried, it will keep /560/ almost indefinitely. It is eaten either with water or with milk, which is better, or else, if one has some meat, by boiling the latter and pouring the *sarabout* into the pot.

The Mossi may not be familiar with *couscous*, but they are familiar with *vessala*. This method of preparing millet consists of boiling the flour as it is boiled for *sarabout*. The difference lies in the amount of flour used. When the mush has been cooked it is allowed to cool, and then fresh or curdled milk is bought and mixed in with it. This kind of mush is made only for the purpose of mixing
[171] it with milk. The Bambara are familiar with *vessala* and call it by name of *fisan* or *finsan*.

484 The Mossi, when they are traveling, often cook millet grains
252 which have not been reduced to flour. This is called *honandourou-ki*
171 ("cooked millet"). The Bambara call it *niobalabala*, the Foulbe *m'bafna-gaouri*, the Sarakolé *ilé-n'kioro*, and all these words have the same meaning. This method of preparing millet is quite unusual, and is resorted to only when the time or means to reduce millet grains to flour are lacking.

[462] Mossi women also make *dolo* (*dama*). To do this, they soak the
273 grains of large red millet in water for two days, and then expose them to the sun and crush them. The flour is boiled for two hours, and then strained and boiled in the necessary amount of water for a whole day. This is transferred to another *canari* and allowed to cool.

462 356 Beside cooking tasks, Mossi women have cleaning tasks. They sweep the huts and *soukala* with handfuls of straw, small primitive brooms 30 or 40 centimeters long. They wash and bleach clothes and make soap. Finally, it is the women who spin cotton and tamp the floor of the huts.

356 This tamping is done as follows. "The natives spread on the surface to be tamped a layer, 10 centimeters thick, of a special black earth that consists chiefly /561/ of ashes and humus resulting from the decomposition of plants and household refuse.

"Above this, the Mossi spread a second layer consisting of clayey ferruginous gravel, from 3 to 5 centimeters thick. The small pebbles are subsequently reduced by heavy tamping to very fine material. Then, the natives spread a little water over this material and tamp again. Once this is done, they allow the floor to dry.

"This procedure is repeated several times, but ordinary water is replaced with *néré* water (the latter resulting from the infusion in hot water of the fragments of *néré* fruit, *dondo* in Mossi) or water into which cow dung has been mixed. When the last tamping and the last drying have been completed, the natives pour *néré* water in large quantities onto the new floor.

"Finally, the last procedure consists of polishing the surface with flat stones." (*Cahier des rapports* of the Ouagadougou circle).

593 The duties of Mossi women toward their husband are as follows:

833 1. The fulfillment of the conjugal duty.

562 "The wife," says Moulins, "must never shirk her conjugal duty except when she is pregnant or nursing.

"Should a woman evade her husband from newlywed shyness or for any other reason, he would use at first all means of persuasion within his command, and especially beg the wife's relatives to have a word with her. Should their exhortations prove vain, coercion would be used by beating the woman or putting her in irons. Finally, should those means fail to bring the wife to compliance, she could be turned out by her husband."

593 2. Faithfulness.

562 "The wife must live with her husband. If she abandons the conjugal domicile, her spouse has the absolute right to force her to return. /562/ If she takes refuge with her relatives, the latter must

593 not shelter her but must on the contrary return her to her husband.
562 If difficulties arise, the husband appeals to the naba, who forces the wife to return to her husband, at whose hands she will get a beating when she arrives....

593 837 684 "...The powers of a deceived husband over his wife's lover were quite fearsome prior to our occupation. He could, at will, either deal with the culprit himself or defer his complaint to the naba. If he dealt himself with his rival and killed him, he handed out the adulterous woman to the Moro Naba and did not have to answer for his crime. If he merely wounded the man, no matter how seriously, he was regarded as having acted in the fullness of his rights as an injured husband, and he kept the wife and gave her a beating. If he appealed to the naba, the guilty pair were punished by being put in irons for a variable period of time. Furthermore, if the adultery had been committed with the wife of a dapouy naba of the Moro Naba (that is to say, a man to whom the Moro Naba had himself given some girl in marriage), the accomplice was compelled to pay the deceived husband a fine of 100,000 cowries.

"Finally, in case of adultery with a chief's wife, both culprits were put to death."

On this subject I find in my notes that prior to our occupation, when a naba was deceived by one of his wives, he killed her with [762] poison and ordered the wife's lover to commit suicide. The latter did this by plunging the head of a poisoned arrow into the calf of his leg.

"It is plain," the author of the Monographie goes on to say, "that the lover was dealt with in the most rigorous manner of all. He could be put to death by the deceived husband in every case, while the wives of a chief were alone liable to supreme punishment. The lover could also be punished with a fine, in a single case anticipated by custom. Finally, he was invariably put in irons on the naba's orders if the deceived husband placed a complaint against him.

"As for the adulterous wife, except when she was /563/ handed over to the Moro Naba by her husband as reparation for the murder of her partner, punishment for her misdemeanor amounted merely to a more or less rigorous beating or to irons for a short period of time. She could, it is true, be turned out by her husband, but the latter

593 made use of this right quite rarely. The woman has productive
837 value in terms of children and labor. And then, in the majority
684 of cases, the husband would merely fulfill the dearest of his wife's
desires by doing so."

593 While the Mossi wife has duties toward her husband, the latter
586 also has obligations toward his wives.

"A wife," says the Monographie, "has the right to demand from her husband more than mere platonic relations.

"Should the latter prevail, however, owing to the husband's impotence or illness, or simply as a result of ill will, the neglected wife would communicate the situation to the first wife of the family head, who would in turn inform her spouse.

"Should the husband's behavior be caused by physical incapacity, the woman would be taken from him and given to one of his brothers, or if there were none to his nearest relative, his sons excepted. Should his behavior be due merely to ill will, however, remonstrances would be made to him, and should these prove fruitless at the end of a few days, the woman would be considered free to return to her family."

593 Just as the husband owes his wives fulfillment of the conjugal
837 duty, he also owes them relative faithfulness.

"The husband has an obligation of relative faithfulness toward his wives, that of not keeping a concubine at the conjugal domicile.
586 Should he transgress this rule, his wives would be fully entitled to obtain a divorce from him, unless he should agree to turn out his partner as a result of his wives' complaint or the intervention of the family head.

"This rule is strictly obeyed, except for the Mossi of the Kipirsi who allow the presence of the husband's concubines among his legitimate wives, and who have rules governing their respective positions.

"In any case the husband is everywhere allowed to /564/ deceive his wives as he pleases outside the conjugal domicile, and they are not entitled to complain about this in any way. Nevertheless, they nearly always have at their disposal a practically infallible although circuitous means of causing the greatest inconvenience to the fickle husband and his partner. As a result of the custom that pledges girls in marriage at a very early age, a husband can hardly commit

593 adultery except with a woman who is already married. A deceived
837 wife who wishes to take her revenge need only reveal to the spouse
of her husband's partner the criminal relations that victimize them
both."

593 Let us add that another of the husband's duties is to render help
602 to his wives' relatives if the latter are in needy circumstances.

Of course, the failure to fulfill these obligations could cause
593 the wife to request a divorce. Divorce thus exists among the Mossi,
586 although women rarely resort to it. The bride price is never claimed
back by the husband, even if the woman has remained sterile. The
children always devolve to the husband.

The husband, on the other hand, may turn out his wife, but Mossi husbands do not usually make use of this right.

585 Let us add that the matter of the girl's virginity at marriage
is settled by the Mossi as by most other Blacks. If a girl is bought
836 or betrothed from a very young age, she must preserve herself intact
for her future husband. An unbetrothed girl, however, is free to use
her own body when she reaches puberty, and if she marries later she
cannot be reprimanded for having become a woman prior to her
wedding.

567 Let us now proceed to the status of slaves.

Two kinds of slaves are distinguished among the Mossi, aside from the usual distinction between trade slaves and house slaves.

1. The daparé (etymologically, "followers," "men who walk behind their master," from da, "man" and paré, "behind"). They are unmarried slaves.

2. The bagaré ("men of the enclosure"). Those are married captives.

/565/ The daparé live with their master and always remain at his disposal for any work that may come up. They have no small individual plots, therefore, and their master provides them with food and clothing at all times. When they reach marriageable age, their master buys them a wife (or at least it was so in the old days; she would cost the master about 60,000 or 70,000 cowries), and then they settle on their own.

567 As for the bagaré, they live separately, work for themselves, see to their own subsistence, etc.

Their duties are as follows:

1. To come and work one day a week on their master's field (on that day, as on other days, they provide their own food).

2. To come and work for their master in exceptional circumstances, such as for example when the master gathers all his neighbors to work on his field.

3. To come and greet their master every year after the harvest. They give him a basketful of millet. When the harvest has been poor, they are exempted from this gift.

4. The master may request from his slave chickens, sheep, an ox or a cow. Chickens may not be denied under any circumstances. As for sheep or beeves, the slave may refuse to provide the animal requested, but then he is expected to go and sell it at market right away, and to give half the money to his master. If the slave refuses to go and sell the animal at market, the master has the right to seize his movable property and sell it.

[426] 5. When the master has debts, the bagaré must help him pay them.

428 567 As for inheritance, when a bagaré died his master left all the property to the children. The oldest son of the bagaré inherited, but he gave something to the other sons. If there was no son, the younger brother inherited. If the sons were children the younger brother also inherited, at least temporarily. If there were no male heirs, the master inherited the property but gave some to the daughters.

567 In short, the position of the bagaré is more similar to that of /566/ serfs than to that of slaves proper. In this respect, their status is a far cry from the familial status of the slaves we have described [171] up to now, and it is much closer to the status of the Dialonké, Soussou /Susu/, and Foulah slaves of Guinea who are also serfs, work three days a week for their master (six hours a day), and are free the rest of the time on condition of seeing to their own subsistence.

567 178 Let us add that since the arrival of the French among the Mossi, the bagaré have gained a considerable amount of freedom. Nowadays, most of them will not give any of their crops to their master.

567 When a master wants one of the sheep or beeves belonging to his
178 *bagaré*, the latter refuses to give it, or if he consents to sell the
animal at market he gives his master but one-tenth of the cowries
paid by the buyer. Nowadays, as a rule, the *bagaré* only "go
[406] along" when their master's debts are involved, and yet some of them
run away with their belongings rather than pay those debts.

567 Let us also add that these slaves, who were mostly of Gourounsi
or Boussansé origin, now want to return to their own land, and there
167 is a continuous exodus, slow but sure, of Mossi slaves toward the
south. Since the French have strictly forbidden the purchase and sale
of slaves, on the other hand, the sources of supply have dried out.
All this makes it clear why among the Mossi, as incidentally throughout
West Africa, we are progressing toward a slow but certain suppression
of slavery and serfdom.

326 In closing, let us say that among the Mossi blacksmiths who
567 live in /special/ quarters or villages and whom we have already
mentioned with regard to their patriarchal and nondecommunalized
family type, we find true slaves of the common familial type such
as we have described up to now, rather than serfs like the *bagaré*.

These slaves live in the same *soukala* as their master, whether married or unmarried, trade or house slaves. During the winter season, they all work on the fields of the *soukala* head from six in the morning to three in the afternoon, with the usual luncheon break. They have small individual plots, which they may work after three o'clock. During /567/ the dry season, they work all day at the blacksmith's trade with their master.

They are provided with food throughout the year by the head of the *soukala*, but they procure their own clothing, jewelry, grigri, etc. The *soukala* head buys the first wife for them and disposes of their daughters in return.

567 The estate of a deceased slave goes to his master and to his sons.
428 As far as livestock and cowries are concerned, the master takes half
326 and gives half to the son or sons. As for clothing, bracelets, etc.,
everything goes to the children. The latter share equally the part of
their father's estate that devolves to them.

567 We can see that just as the family type of Mossi blacksmiths
326 bears witness to an older state of affairs, the status of slaves among
them also bears witness to the ancient local conditions prior to

567 Dagomba conquest. Both family type and slave status, indeed, re-
326 fer back to the Bobo, Gourounsi, etc.

000 We come now to public powers. We refer the reader to Appendix 32 /not translated/ for a study of property regulations and neighborhood relations, and plunge forthwith into the study of public powers.

631 We already know that the Mossi political organization is centralized. The villages belong to cantons, which are in turn gathered
into provinces under direct administration or into mere vassal provinces. At the summit of the hierarchy stands the king, the Moro
Naba, the supreme chief of the Mossi, who lives at Ouagadougou.
To give an idea of the former importance, or at least relative importance, of this empire, we shall state that in the Ouagadougou
[162] circle alone there were eight provinces including among them 300
cantons, 5,000 villages or small towns, and 861,700 inhabitants.

643 Let us begin our description of this political organism with the head, that is, with the Moro Naba.

Moro Naba means "chief of the Mossi," from naba, "chief"
and Moro or Mora which means Mossi in the singular. Moro yields
Mossi or Mossé in the plural. (The French have grown accustomed
to saying "one Mossi, several Mossi," but this is a barbarism and
one should /568/ actually say, "one Moro, several Mossi," just as
one says, "one Gourounga, several Gourounsi," "one Kipirga, several Kipirsi," etc.). As for the word for "chief," it is both naba
and soba in Mossi. Naba seems to be the word brought by the con-
[192] quering Mossi-Dagomba group, while soba is probably the word that
was used by the autochtonous population to designate chiefs.

645 Prior to the French conquest, the Moro Naba was surrounded by a certain number of ministers or eminent dignitaries who were given 1) specific duties /at court/, 2) in addition, part of the territory to govern. This is what accounted for provinces over and above the cantons, at least in those areas that were administered directly, but the heads of those provinces did not reside there. They lived at Ouagadougou, and were first and foremost ministers of the Moro Naba.

They were:

645 1. The Kamsoro Naba, chief of the eunuchs and prime minister, a sort of minister of the interior.

2. The Ouidi Naba, chief of the cavalry.

3. The Gounga Naba, chief of the infantry.

4. The Toralé Naba, guardian of the tombs of the Moro Nabas.

5. The Baloum Naba, major-domo and chief of the *soroné* (pages). He might be said to rule over the interior of the palace.

645 635 Those five ministers ruled over the five Mossi provinces that were administered directly: Kamsoro, Ouidi, Gounga, Laralé, and Baloum. As we can see, those provinces had no proper names, no names of their own, and each took the name of the dignitary who governed it. Thus, they were not true geographical or ethnic provinces, but artificial districts lifted out of an area that was both too extensively parceled out and too homogeneous to yield spontaneously anything but villages and cantons.

644 In addition to those five ministers, among which the Kamsoro Naba and Baloum Naba seem to have been the most important, there were other dignitaries and servitors, as follows: /569/

1. The Tamsaba or Kinsaba, high chief of the bodyguards.
2. The Samandé Naba, chief of the bodyguards.
3. The Pouy Naba, chief of the fetisheers.
4. The Gandé Naba, high priest and sacrificer.
5. The Dapouy Naba, chief of the servitors.
6. The Kambo Naba, subchief of the servitors.
7. The Bindé Naba, chief of the Moro Naba's drummers.
8. The Ouidianga Naba, chief of the grooms.
9. The Mendo Naba, chief or representative of the butchers.
10. The Dara Haba, chief of the markets.
11. The Kamboué Naba, executioner.
12. Finally, the Yarsé Naba, chief or representative of the Yarsé settled among the Mossi. The prestige he enjoyed actually ranked him immediately beneath the five ministers and the Tamsaba.

594 "The various functions at the court of the Moro Naba," says Moulins, "are hereditary in the sense that their holders are always chosen by the sovereign among close relatives of the previous occupant in office.

644 "In addition to these dignitaries, the Moro Naba is surrounded with a veritable army of soroné (pages), samandé (bodyguards), ourkima (grooms), and jussaba (eunuchs)."

Some explanations are in order concerning the soroné. They are young boys or adolescents, from seven or eight to fifteen years old, who are to be found not only around the Moro Naba but around all Mossi chiefs, no matter who they may be, ministers, dignitaries, canton chiefs, and even village chiefs. These chiefs obtain them, as we saw earlier, by claiming the first-born son as well as the first-born daughter of all the men to whom they give a wife. The boy is made into a soroné, and the girl used to perpetuate the recruitment of soroné and servitors by giving her in marriage to one of them.

The soroné wear their hair like women. Like them, they wear
644 heavy copper bracelets at the wrists and ankles, and if rumor is to
838 be credited, they not only /570/ bear the attributes of women but
also substitute for them occasionally. It seems that the Mossi must
834 not have carnal relations with their wives on Friday. This is a religious ordinance meant to ingratiate the divinities, but it overlooked the soroné.... In any case this corruption does not reach the common masses of the Mossi, who do not have the means to employ soroné. Thus it applies only to chiefs.

644 No matter what the case may be, the soroné are usually selected among the most attractive boys, and some of them have great beauty with their woman's hairdo.

Another duty of their position is to remain virgins... as far as women are concerned.

644 "Every year," says Moulins, "the chastity of the Moro Naba's
78 soroné is put to a test. They are requested by the Pouy Naba to cast their
684 reflection into a gourd full of water, and according to the manner in which the reflection is cast, they are proclaimed free from stain or convicted of carnal relations, in which case, prior to our occupation, they were put to death without further delay. This is because the soroné, as confidants of the Naba, are often entrusted with state secrets and could only maintain the discretion required by their position if they were to avoid the entreaties of love.

644 "When the soroné reach manhood, the Naba gives them a wife and sends them away. The first child born of the union between a soroné and the wife given him by the Naba devolves to the latter,

644 who will make him into a sorone if he is a boy, or alone have the right to give her in marriage if she is a girl."

143 Moulins also provides interesting details on the manner in which the Moro Naba spends his days, or rather spent them in the past, for this description refers to the state of affairs prior to the French occupation.

"From Ouarga's reign onward, the Moro Nabas, who had previously resided successively in various parts of the empire, settled at Ouagadougou where they have lived ever since. Custom constrains them never to leave /571/ the capital except in unusually serious circumstances. This is because the land falls into anarchy [674 when the sovereign is absent from Ouagadougou. All theft, pillage, 696] and murder committed at that time remain unprosecuted.

644 173 "Every morning at seven, the Moro Naba emerges from his hut. His saddled horse waits before the door. He mounts it and pretends to set out on his way, but after riding around his hut he dismounts and goes back into his hut only to come out again immediately.

"This formality of the protocol has the following origin. A long time ago the favorite wife of the Moro Naba having fled to La, the sovereign wished to go and fetch her himself. He mounted his horse and was about to leave when all the court dignitaries rushed to him, admonishing him not to carry out his project, for his absence from Ouagadougou could only result in anarchy. The monarch gave way, and soon afterwards his wife returned of her own accord. It is in memory of the magnanimity of this sovereign, who sacrificed himself in the interests of his people, that every morning since that time the Moro Naba has pretended to prepare for departure and to then give up his plan.

644 "Following this ceremony, the Moro Naba settles himself in a recess sunk into the wall that surrounds his residence, and then, to the strains of abundant music, the whole court comes to the sovereign and prostrates itself before him, brow in the dust, forearms striking the ground in rhythm with a great clicking of bracelets. Then business is attended to.

"First, the five province chiefs come forward in order of precedence, relate to the Moro Naba those events which have taken place since the preceding day, and receive his instructions for the day. Then they present to him the canton and village chiefs and the common natives who wish for an audience.

644 "The Moro Naba, assisted by his ministers and with the help of frequent libations of *dolo*, listens to the requests which are made /572/ to him and passes sentence on the trials which are referred to him.

"Around eleven o'clock he withdraws into his hut and rests until three o'clock, at which time he comes and seats himself on his throne again.

"The Moro Naba's every gesture is prescribed by a minute protocol and accompanied by flute and drum music and finger snappings by his entourage.

"Is he riding out for a short stroll around Ouagadougou? The whole court follows him, either on foot or on horseback. His griot make the air re-echo with their shouts, to the accompaniment of drums and flutes. A groom leads his horse by the rein, while two *soroné* hold his stirrups and a third one, on horseback by his side, shelters him with a huge umbrella. Other pages follow carrying his pillow, his sword, and *canari* of *dolo* from which the sovereign draws frequent and abundant libations along the way.

"At night the Moro Naba, in disguise and accompanied by a single *soroné*, wanders incognito through the various village quarters in order to find out what is going on without being recognized.

[782] "On certain set dates, he goes to localities named Sabaye and Saraboutenga, not far from Ouagadougou, where he sacrifices beeves, sheep, and chickens.

444 595 "The Moro Naba has very numerous wives. In addition to those he marries himself, there are those of his predecessor and all those that devolve to him in the course of his reign, among them, in certain cases, the adulterous wives of his subjects.

644 595 684 "The sovereign's wives do not all live with him. They are settled in villages ruled by eunuchs and near which no one could come, on pain of death, prior to our occupation. Every year the faithfulness of the Moro Naba's wives is checked by submitting them to the same test as the *soroné*. Adultery is punished by death for the wife as well as her partner. It even seems that adultery with one of the sovereign's wives is regarded /573/ as the least pardonable crime a man can commit. In fact, the *nakomsé* or sons of chiefs are liable to the death penalty only in this case.

664 "The wives of the Moro Haba never give birth or raise their
554 children at his own place of residence, but only in one of the
eunuch villages. In theory they do not stand above the wives of
common natives, but in practice they enjoy high consideration
among the Mossi, like all that is connected with the Moro Naba.

"The sons of the sovereign, once weaned, are entrusted to
a province or canton chief who is put in charge of their education.
[582] At the age of ten they are married and settled in a village, where
they live, surrounded by a court, but without necessarily being
given a territorial command.

"The prerogatives attached to the title of Moro Naba's son are vast as long as the monarch is alive. They grant the right to steal, to loot, and even to kill with impunity.

"Upon the death of the Moro Naba, his sons become mere nakomsé (sons of chiefs) whose position nevertheless remains quite privileged.

643 "One of the sons of the deceased sovereign, however, is granted
644 special privileges. At the death of the Moro Naba, the latter's
wives elect one of his young sons who adopts his name and, so to
554 speak, perpetuates him. He has no /territorial/ command, but he
is surrounded by a court similar to that of the Moro Naba, he enjoys respect almost equal to that paid to the latter, and he is a sacred figure. No one has the right to contradict him or to harm him.

644 "As for the Moro Naba's daughters, although in principle they
554 do not stand above ordinary Mossi girls, in practice they are treated
with the strictest respect by all natives. Once married, they have almost complete freedom of action vis-à-vis their husband, and they often take advantage of this to lead a most unruly existence.

643 "When the Moro Naba's death has been verified, his burial is
766 carried out and followed by the funeral ceremonies, which are held
in the same fashion as for a common native, with the sole difference /574/ that they have more brilliance and that the sacrifices are more sizable.

642 "For the whole duration of the interregnum, the land falls into
672 a state of complete anarchy. Everyone has the right to kill, loot,
and steal as he pleases. Convicts who are serving sentence are fully pardoned and set free.

643 "Following the funeral ceremony, an electoral college consisting of the Ouidi Naba as president, assisted by the Gounga Naba, Laralé Naba, and Tamsaba, assembles in the greatest mystery and holds its meetings in a spot as withdrawn or inconspicuous as possible. Owing to the reigning state of anarchy, indeed, the followers of the various candidates would not fail to disturb the deliberations of the electoral college if they were to find out where it is meeting, and to support the candidacy of their respective favorites with arrow shots.

"When the members of the college have come to an agreement on the choice of the new sovereign (who can only be selected among the direct descendants of Oubry, founder of the empire) they secretly warn the chosen man, who also comes to them in secret. Then each of the four electors convokes his warriors, who come and gather around them and the new Moro Naba. On the following morning the informed populace flocks in, and the sovereign is proclaimed king.

"The disturbances of the interregnum come to an end from that moment.

"The Moro Naba, followed by the high dignitaries and the multitude, goes to Tamvilli (a quarter of Ouagadougou), where he spends the first day of his reign. When evening comes, he goes to the chief of the village of Ouagadougou where he spends the night. On the following morning he goes to Paspanga (a quarter of Ouagadougou) where, on the spot where the dwelling of Naba Kom once stood, he receives the canton chiefs and nakomsé, who come and render their oath of fealty. Finally, when this last formality is over, the members of the electoral college depart, and he proceeds along with the Baloum Naba, Kamsoro Naba, and Jussaba Naba to the royal residence.

"The unlucky /575/ pretenders are subjected to the most cruel banter throughout the coronation ceremonies, but once these are over they become kourita, or in other words the highest-ranking nakomsé.

643
669 "We have already stated that as soon as the Moro Naba is proclaimed sovereign, the disturbances of the interregnum come to an end. Mossi history records but a single case where the decision

643 669 of the electoral college was not accepted by the populace and disturbances occurred in spite of the proclamation of the king-elect. This was when Naba Sagha, the son of Naba Kom, was chosen. The people would have liked to see Kaoko, son of Naba Zombéré, nominated. Dissatisfied because the sovereign of their choice had not reached the throne, they would not acknowledge the man chosen by the college. The new monarch managed to take over the throne only after waging a bloody battle at the head of his followers against his unlucky rival.

645 635 The province chiefs who are ministers are nominated by the Moro Naba, who selects the man most deserving of the succession among the closest relatives of the chief to be replaced. Province chiefs enjoy considerable power in the administration of their provinces, they are surrounded with a large court, but they stand under the direct control of the Moro Naba.

635 It must be added that aside from the five provinces lying under the direct rule of the Moro Naba of Ouagadougou, there were four others (Boussouma and Béloussa to the northeast, Yako to the northwest, Tenkodogo to the southeast) that were mere vassal provinces and that actually enjoyed nearly complete autonomy prior to our occupation. Tenkodogo province was especially important.

The chiefs of these /latter/ provinces were true monarchs selected in the same fashion as the Moro Naba by the electoral college of their province. Once elected, they enjoyed all the prerogatives of sovereignty, nominating the canton chiefs and administering their provinces as they saw fit.

[631] Their power was as absolute in their own sphere as that of the Moro Naba over the whole of his subject provinces, but they acknowledged his sovereignty and offered him a gift as a token of their vassalage at the time when their powers were handed over to them.

634 624 /576/ Within the subject provinces, the canton chiefs were nominated by the Moro Naba on the basis of an introduction by the province chief. They were always selected among the closest relatives of the chief they were to replace, always descendants of Oubry, the first Moro Naba. They stood under the direct orders of the province chief, whom they had to use as an intermediary to communicate with the Moro Naba. It was their task to proceed with

634 the nomination of the village chiefs, who were always selected
621 from the family of the preceding chief.

428 631 Let us add that in principle, and all other things being equal, it was the eldest son of the deceased chief who was supposed to succeed his father, and this applied to village chiefs as well as to canton chiefs, province chiefs, and the Moro Naba. This principle ran counter to the true patriarchal principle where the younger brother is always the natural and legitimate heir of the deceased brother. The requirements of a warlike existence had probably forced it upon the Mossi at the time of their conquest of the Dagomba and Mossi territories.

This principle of direct inheritance (rather than collateral inheritance) had been restricted, however, by the powers of higher authorities represented by canton chiefs vis-à-vis village chiefs, province chiefs vis-à-vis canton chiefs, the Moro Naba vis-à-vis the province chiefs, and the electoral college of the high dignitaries vis-à-vis the future Moro Naba. In short, the warriors' principle of inheritance from father to eldest son ruled among the Mossi in the power sphere, but had to give way to the exigencies of government whenever necessary.

631 Let us not believe that the third principle, namely the consent of the people involved, was altogether unknown among the Mossi (the consent of the village inhabitants in the case of a village chief, of the canton notables in the case of a canton chief, of the province notables in the case of a province chief, etc.) This third principle, however, was the least important, the least taken into account, the least actualized from a mere potential. /577/ Whenever it clashed with the others, it had to give way.

635 Let us add that the majority of Mossi chiefs were aided by representatives called *baloum*.

634 624 "The province chiefs," says the *Monographie*, "the majority of canton chiefs, and even the chiefs of a few important villages, are aided by one or several *baloum* or palace masters, whom they choose freely. These are sometimes former captives, but most frequently they are common natives or former *soroné*, and they are never *nakomsé*. Their function is not hereditary. It grants them the right to substitute for the *naba*, to speak and act in his name."

687 631 Moulins adds, "Custom does not anticipate the possibility of a chief being, properly speaking, stripped of his rule. A naba who gives the sovereign reasons for complaint is summoned under a pretext of some sort and put to death without further ceremony at the close of the audience granted to him. If the chief, guessing at the true purpose of the Moro Naba's invitation, demurs at going, a column is sent into the region over which he rules with the mission of seizing him and taking him to the Moro Naba, who has him put to death by his pages."

622 Let us add that in the Mossi /language/ a village chief is called tengasoba or tenganaba, from tenga, "earth, place, spot" and by extension "village," and from naba or soba, "chief." There are also chiefs of quarters called sakanaba, sakasoba, or sakakasaman, from saka, "quarter," and naba, soba, or kasaman, "chief." Mossi villages are indeed divided into quarters located some 200, 300, 400, or 500 meters apart and consisting of several soukala which usually stand, as we know, 40 or 50 meters apart. When the head of a quarter dies, it is the oldest soukala chief in the quarter who replaces him.

565 Below the Moro Naba and the chiefs of provinces, cantons, and villages, there existed among the Mossi a true aristocracy, a genuine nobility, the nakomsé, or sons of chiefs. "They were granted," says Moulins, "important privileges. They had the right to loot passing caravans and to demand from the common natives gifts of cowries, livestock, grain, etc., which the latter could not deny them. They were forbidden to kill, but if they committed murder, instead of being put to death, they were merely put in irons for a short period of time. Furthermore, they were granted the privilege of being tried only by the Moro Naba, head of their house, for all their crimes and misdemeanors." They are all descended, or supposed to be descended, from Moro Naba Oubry, conqueror of Mossi territory.

565 171 The existence of this aristocracy among the Mossi must be carefully noted, for it distinguishes them sharply from the populations we have studied up to now, Bobo, Nounouma, Kassouna, Sissala, Dagari, etc. Nobles are not found often among the Blacks of West Africa, and they are found only among groups that are, or formerly

565 171 were, conquerors. This represents a higher level of social complexity and development, in short, a higher level of civilization.

565 556 The nakomsé were and still are gathered in separate villages scattered throughout the territory. They did the same work as other Mossi, but prior to the French occupation they also practiced looting, which was their chief expedient, their major source of wealth. True, this manner of acquiring wealth had lent them improvident habits. Nowadays they own no more small livestock than the Mossi populace, and only a little more large livestock, while they should own much more in view of their former opportunities to acquire wealth. They immediately "ate up" what they looted, however, counting on future pillage. Nowadays they no longer loot, but they seem to have preserved their former improvident habits. It should be noted, however, that they own considerably more horses than other Mossi.

565 142 I saw at Pirigui, in January, 1909, one of those villages of chiefs' sons. There were altogether 841 inhabitants of the nobility with their families and their slaves. Those people would be interesting to study from the point of view of physical anthropology. There were faces totally at variance with Negro faces, truly distinguished physiognomies, oriental and semitic casts of features, in short, enough /579/ to strike an observer even though unfamiliar with physical anthropology.

642 The superstructure of the Mossi state thus consisted of a supreme chief, a carefully established hierarchy of chiefs, and a class of nobles to whom important privileges were granted.

651 As for taxes, "every year at the end of the winter season, prior to our occupation," says Moulins, "the canton chiefs had to come, greet the Moro Naba, and offer him certain gifts (beeves, sheep, millet) which constituted a sort of fixed due." This was the common tax levied after each harvest.

"In addition, whenever the sovereign needed anything whatever, he requested the province chiefs to secure it for him. They summoned the canton chiefs, who in turn gathered the village chiefs, who secured through the soukala chiefs the animals, grain, cowries, and other items requested.

[431] "Finally, whenever a native, chief or common man, came to the Moro Naba, he offered a present to the latter.

651 "Market-place dues were levied by the Dara Haba, for the sovereign's account, on the markets surrounding Ouagadougou. The Moro Naba also got the tusks of elephants and one haunch of every buffalo or koba killed by hunters.

643 651 425 "Furthermore, the right of confiscation which the sovereign could use for his own benefit without any precise rule imperatively limiting the conditions under which he could exercise it, permitted him to augment, whenever needed, the revenue derived from his usual sources.

651 "Province chiefs, in turn, had the right to demand, through the canton chiefs, whatever they needed for the support of their families and retinues. Canton chiefs held the same rights over the villages within their rule. The village chiefs themselves received from their subjects a certain number of gifts."

692 Justice was rendered as follows: /580/

1. By the family heads, aided by the family elders.
2. By the village chiefs, aided by the village elders.
3. By the canton chiefs, aided by the elders of their own quarter.
4. By the province chiefs, aided by the elders of their own quarter and by the dignitaries of their entourage.
5. By the Moro Naba, aided by his ministers and the dignitaries of his entourage.

"The respective competence /legal authority/ of those various jurisdictions," says Moulins, "were in no way clearly determined or defined. The deed and the circumstances alone were taken into account in bringing up before a certain authority a matter which the lower jurisdiction had proved unable to resolve. A matter which the family council had been unable to solve was brought before the village chief, then the canton chief, the province chief, and finally the Moro Naba.

694 "Justice was free of charge in the sense that procedural expenses were unknown, but custom demanded that a litigant should never appear before a judge empty handed. He had to offer him at least a white chicken. The outcome of a trial must often have depended on the greater or lesser generosity displayed by the respective sides."

681 As far as penalties were concerned, Mossi justice was stern and thus ran counter to the "patriarchal" justice of the Bobo, Gourounsi, etc. Murder was always punished by death (except in the case of nobles). As for thefts, physical aggression, and matters involving debts, they were adjusted in the manner described when we discussed the Yarsé, who were subject to Mossi justice since they were settled in their territory /not translated/. [754] We shall not, therefore, go over this again. Let us merely note that the Mossi, being fetishists, were familiar with matters of sorcery.

695 754 At Dembo, in the Yatenga area, when a young person died suddenly, "red powder" would be mixed in water and everyone would drink of it while swearing by *Tensé* /Tr.: the earth deities/ that he was innocent. The culprits would die. In other villages of the Yatenga area, people suspected of dealing in sorcery had to drink earth taken from the spot where sacrifices were performed and diluted in water. Those /581/ who refused to drink and swear were killed. At Kabayoro, a Mossi village located in the canton of Koumbili, if a man or woman suddendly ill, it was said that it was So-and-So, a sorcerer, who had eaten the soul. If the sick person died, his hands were washed with water and the liquid was given to the sorcerer to drink. He had to swear his innocence and invoke death unto himself if he should lie. If guilty he died; if innocent the water did him no harm. If he refused to swear and drink, he was put in irons and left there to die of hunger and thirst. The *bara* /soothsayer/ played no role in such occurrences. It was the sick person who pointed out the sorcerer. If the patient failed to designate someone, however, this meant that he was simply dying of illness. [761]

701 Now for the army and police. "In case of war," says Moulins, "the province chiefs summoned the canton chiefs, who hastened forth with all their able-bodied men. They all gathered behind the Tamsaba and followed him.

625 "As for policing, it was taken care of by village and canton chiefs, who arrested culprits with the help of their own followers, or, if necessary, by summoning the whole male population of the village."

161 How many inhabitants did this Mossi empire number, with its careful centralization, its hierarchy of chiefs, and its class of nobles, at the time of the French occupation (1896)?

In 1909 the census yielded 861,700 souls in the circle of Ouagadougou itself and 273,000 in the Tenkodogo residency, or a total of 1,135,000 inhabitants. From this figure, however, we must deduct the independent Boussansé (99,000 in the Tenkodogo residency) and also the people of the Kipirsi (Ouagadougou circle; in theory they are ruled by the Mossi, in fact they are independent; they may be estimated at 40,000). This leaves, for the five subject provinces and the four vassal provinces, about 996,000 inhabitants. It may thus be said that the Moro Naba of Ouagadougou ruled over a population of about a million men.

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563 Out of this million men, there were roughly /583/ 850,000 Mossi, 40,000 Boussansé, 69,000 Yarsé, 32,000 Foulbé, 5,000 Silmi-Mossi, 1,000 Songhay (in the northern part of the Ouagadougou circle), and 1,000 Haoussa scattered here and there in the same fashion as the Yarsé and Foulbé.

161 We already know that this Ouagadougou empire did not make up the whole Mossi population. There stood alongside it two other kingdoms which must formerly have been subject to Ouagadougou but which had gained their independence long before our occupation. One of them, Yatenga, with Ouahigouya as its capital, was located to the northwest of the Ouagadougou empire. The other one, Gourma, with Fada N'Gourma as its capital, was located to the east. Those two kingdoms may have added up between them to a population of 450,000 in which the Mossi element predominated, with Habé and Samo elements in the Ouahigouya circle, and Gourmanké elements in the circle of Fada N'Gourma.

In short, about a million and a half inhabitants were divided among the Mossi kingdoms in the bend of the Niger, with one million in the most important of those kingdoms, that of Ouagadougou.

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648 The population of the Mossi was, and still is, extraordinarily dense as compared with the over-all population density of West Africa. Among the Mossi, indeed, there are about 25 inhabitants per square kilometer, while in French Guinea, for example, there is an average of 6 inhabitants per square kilometer. This stems

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from the fact that the Mossi empire was centralized. The internal struggles which often occur among primitive Blacks (Bobo, Gourounsi, Boussansé, Kipirsi, etc.) between villages, quarters, or even soukala, did not exist among the Mossi. Internal peace and security prevailed. In addition, the same centralized power that prevented Negro anarchy also prevented the territory from being devastated by chance conquerors, founders of empires. Thus, while the Djermabé Songhay devastated Gourounsi territory, a land of independent villages or small cantons, and cast it into a kingdom by force of arms, they did not dare attack their Mossi neighbors for fear of the Moro Naba's ten thousand horsemen. /583/ Thus, both internal and external peace were insured thanks to a centralized power. Hence, the impression made by the territory on various travelers between the time of Barth's trip (he did not see Mossi itself, but followed its northern border) and the French occupation. "Mossi territory is regarded as being untouchable," says Marc (op. cit., p. 28). "No doubt, at that time (the time of Barth's trip), as Crozat verified forty years later, one was struck on entering Mossi territory by the complete safety in which the people lived, while everywhere else war and the hunt for slaves devastated the villages. And one mentioned enviously the Mossi peasants who walked singly to their fields, hoe on shoulder, while everywhere else the head of the family had to keep his weapons at hand night and day."

Marc attributes this safety to the Mossi fear of fetishes. He thus looks far afield for an obvious explanation. The Gourounsi, too, had fetishes, and yet the Djermabé did not spare them and treated them more or less as cranes would treat frogs. The Mossi were spared because they lived in a centralized and thus powerful empire, in spite of Marc's assertion that this power was nil since it could not resist Lt. Voulet's handful of riflemen. Indeed, it was nil against power displayed in European fashion, just as Achanti /Ashanti/ power was nil against British strength, and Toucouleur power could not prevail against the forces of Col. Archinard. This Mossi power was nevertheless considerable within its own sphere, that is to say, in West Africa and against other Blacks. It sufficed to give the Mossi an advantage over the Kipirsi, Gourounsi, Boussansé, etc. It sufficed to prevent Toucouleur or Djermabé attack.

642 648 In short, the Mossi enjoyed the benefits of a strong and centralized government, established no doubt in former times at the price of large-scale massacres and exterminations. And this is what makes us ponder and what is, so to speak, the reverse side of the Black conquerors' coin. It is probable that Oubry, the founder of the Mossi empire in /584/ the twelfth century, was in his time something of a Samory or a Rabah. He probably managed to establish his empire only through the crushing, pillage, and massacre of a tremendous number of small, independent Black villages or small Lélésé, Nounouma, Boussansé, and Habé cantons. Yet in the nineteenth century, on the soil of this empire established at such a price, there were 25 inhabitants per square kilometer, while among the neighboring Gourounsi who have retained their freedom there are the 5 or 6 inhabitants per square kilometer common to West Africa as a whole. In addition, while the Gourounsi were prey to the Songhay, the Habé to the Toucouleur, and the Malinké and Bambara to Samory, our Mossi lived in safety. They had less independence and anarchistic freedom, but they had internal peace and external security. They had to obey their chiefs, but they knew no domestic struggles, no crushing by foreign pillagers. In short, the Mossi had entered upon the course of orderly government, and represented a superior state of civilization.

771 Now, we need only furnish a few details on Mossi religion. The majority of the Mossi population has remained fetishistic.

771 648 We saw above that the Mossi, at the time of their great expansion in the bend of the Niger, came into conflict with a Moslemized empire, the Mali empire, and that the second Songhay empire also led redoutable religious crusades against the Mossi. Under such circumstances the Mossi were bound to regard Islam as a foe. It is true that later the destruction of the second Songhay empire by the Moroccans (1591) brought peace to the Mossi on their northern frontier and freed them from the fear of Moslem invasion. The Yarsé settled in turn among the Mossi, and owing to their intelligence, industry, and capacity for trade, created for themselves a well-respected position. This was bound to incline the Mossi favorably toward Islam, or at least to lessen their prejudices and

771 their traditional fear. Nevertheless, Captain Lambert says that
648 prior to the French occupation, Moslems were forbidden by the
598 Moro Naba to /585/ say their prayers (kella) publicly. They merely
recited their rosary (séki) silently.

797 Since the French occupation, the Mossi have lost all their prejudices against Islam, because they have been conquered by a different foe. In addition the Moslems tell them, as they do everywhere else in West Africa, that the Whites will only be vanquished and will only leave the country when everyone has become a Moslem. This leads the Mossi to start salaaming, and actually it is probable that there have been more conversions to Islam among the Mossi since our occupation than prior to it. This result, which may appear strange at first, is indubitable. Actually these conversions, although more numerous than they used to be, are still rare if we consider that the enormous majority of the Mossi population and the territory as a whole remains fetishistic.

Let us proceed to a description of Mossi religious customs.

781 First, the funeral ceremonies.

155 When a Mossi is ill he summons a soothsayer (bara in Mossi). The latter takes some earth and looks at it to see what will happen to the sick man. Then he states either that the latter will get well, on condition of obliging with a sheep and a chicken, or else that he will die. In the first case the requested chicken and sheep are brought to the bara, and then, if the sick person gets well, he gets something else, a sheep or 5,000 cowries. If the sick person dies, contrary to prediction, the family merely says that the bara was a liar and nothing else happens.

764 If the deceased is a man, it is the family elders who care for him. They stretch his limbs and even his fingers so he will not turn rigid immediately, and they close his eyes. Then one of the elders washes the corpse with cold water in the presence of the whole family. After this, the elders sew a shroud with cotton bands to wrap around the deceased, and then he is rolled up in a mat.

The soukala chiefs (we know that among the Mossi every household head is the head of a soukala) are buried in the courtyard /586/ of their soukala, or else before its gate. The grave diggers are fetched, and they dig a hole the size of a man, lay the corpse at the bottom, and place boards above it to prevent the soil from weighing

764 down on the chest of the deceased. Then they spread out on the boards a layer of clay, and add earth until the hole is filled. A small canari is placed on the grave to mark its location.

Other members of the soukala are buried around it in the maize field. A canari is also placed upon the grave. The same applies
[766] to slaves. Only people stricken with sleeping sickness are buried in the bush, to prevent the spread of the disease.

The deceased is buried on the morning following the day of his death. The heir of the deceased soukala chief and the family elders kill chickens upon the grave. They take the animals by the legs and crush their skull on the floor of the grave. This is the liturgical procedure for such killings. Nine chickens are thus killed
[536] in succession and set aside to be eaten. If the soukala is wealthy, sheep are killed instead of chickens. They are seized by their hind legs and their head is struck three times on the floor of the grave, then their throat is cut with a knife. The souls of all those animals go to the deceased.

On the night following the burial, people people play drums, shriek, dance, shoot guns. When day breaks everyone returns home to wash, rest, and eat. Then they return when the sun sets, and this goes on for three successive nights.

765 When the ceremony is over, the date of a new reunion is set for 30, 40, 60 days or even a year later. This second ceremony is often made to coincide with the time of the millet harvest. The children of the deceased have their heads shaved. Much to is prepared. The sisters and daughters who have married away come on the date set, bringing sheep and dolo. The family and the whole village come to greet the successor of the deceased soukala head, to drink and to eat. The griot and large drums are sent for. People make music, dance, sing, and drink for two days, and /587/ this time there is no weeping. This second reunion ends the funeral ceremonies occasioned by someone's death.

769 The Mossi have a yearly feast for their dead and their ancestors. It is the Tiougou or Bassara, which is also called Pélĕga in other areas. This feast is celebrated in December, when all the millet has been harvested and the cold weather has come. The family and soukala heads have much dolo prepared and pour it onto the graves

769 along with millet flour mixed in water. A few chickens are also killed. No one works on that day, but people eat, drink, and rest. There is no drumming or dancing, however.

Other Mossi (at Yakki, for example) make offerings to the ancestors in the hut of their first wife rather than on the graves.

Another feast comes at sowing time and is called Tengana. Certain leaves are sought in the bush, cooked with beans and underground peas, and eaten. Much dolo is also preapred.

241 776 On the first day of sowing, one goes to the fields and offers a chicken, millet flour, and dolo to the field stones (tenkougouri) and to the earth (tenga or tempeloun), so the sowing will go well, so there will be a good harvest, and so everyone will be in good health.

There is also an earth feast or Tensé (plural of tenga), which is celebrated once a year during the rainy season. It is the Moro Naba who sets the exact date of the Tensé. Every soukala head [782] kills a beef, a sheep, or a chicken. The young men collect the blood of the sacrificed animals in gourds and pour some upon the ground (to the Earth) in order to secure a good crop. The remainder is mixed with the flour of large white millet and eaten. Much dolo is consumed. The earth feast is the special festivity of those people who are called Tenga (earth), Tembila, Tenfisi, etc., and of those who were born on the day of the Tensé.

On that day sacrifices are also offered to Naba Ouondé (the Chief God).

/588/ On years when the previous millet harvest was bad, the Tensé is not celebrated.

The Mossi have no special harvesting feast. Actually, it is the Tiougou or Bassara (celebrated when the millet has been harvested) that is the harvesting feast as well as the feast of the ancestors.

782 778 The Mossi do not offer sacrifices to isolated trees, but they do to sacred groves or woods.

At Ouagadougou, at the spot where the White Fathers now live, there once stood a small sacred wood made up of large trees and thorny bushes, where sacrifices were offered before the French tore it down.

Every year the Moro Naba offered a sheep and a chicken to this sacred grove through the head of the Sékou quarter. He also offered

782 dolo and millet flour. There was no set time for this. The flesh
778 of the sacrificed animals devolved to the sacrificer, the head of Sékou.

At present day sacred groves are still to be found in various Mossi villages. Thus, for example, there are three at Kabayoro, two of which belong to individuals and one to the village. The Earth chief /Tr.: Tengsoba/ of Kabayoro offers sacrifices to the village grove whenever the bara says so.

The Mossi also make sacrifices to the hills.

At Sabtinga, about 17 kilometers northwest of Ouagadougou, there is a rise in the ground called Tantiibo where the Moro Naba used to go once a year with the Baloum Naba, many chiefs and people at the time when the weather begins to grow cold. He ordered a beef, a chicken, millet flour, and a gourd of dolo to be taken along, and they were handed over to the head of the quarter where the hillock stood. This chief performed the sacrifice and begged the piece of ground to grant good health to the Moro Naba. Only
[839] the Moro Naba, the Balou, the sacred people (eunuchs), and the soroné were present at the sacrifice, Other people who had come to Sabtinga remained in the village, whence the Moro Naba set out on foot to the spot of the sacrifice.

At Kombé-Padanda, a small hillock located in a /589/ Ouagadougou quarter, the same sacrifice was offered in the same fashion and at the same time of year.

326 Let us add that when Mossi blacksmiths go and smelt iron ore
782 in the bush, they kill chickens and offer millet flour on the spot where they extract the ore. The sacrifice is offered to the spirits of the hill, as well as to the Earth and to Naba Ouondé.

778 Sacrifices are made to watercourses as well as to hills, either
782 at fishing time or whenever the bara indicate that a certain stream requires a certain sacrifice.

825 As far as crocodiles are concerned, some of them are held
262 sacred by the Mossi. As for snakes, they are killed and usually eaten, but not everyone eats them. Some people abstain.

778 As for the Earth, the Moro Naba had sheep, chickens, millet
782 flour, and dolo handed over to the Baloum Naba through eunuchs several times a year, whenever a bara told him to do so. The Baloum Naba handed these gifts in person to the chief of Ouagadougou,

778 whose ancestors had ruled the soil of the territory. In the name of
782 the Moro Naba, he entrusted him with the task of offering all those
gifts to the Earth so that the latter might favor the sovereign.
Ouagadougou Naba performed the sacrifice before the door of his *soukala*.

[721] When the Moro Naba went to war, he also ordered the chief
of Ougadougou to perform a sacrifice to the Earth. The *bara* indicated what should be sacrificed in order to insure victory, to "break" the villages that were to be attacked.

782 When rain failed to come, the Moro Naba would go to the
hillock at Koumbé /sic/-Padanda, and have the head of the quarter offer a sacrifice (beef, sheep, chicken) to secure rain. If rain refused to come, the *bara* were consulted once more, and sacrifices were offered until it came.

176 The Mossi also have a sky god whom they call *Ounam* as well
782 as *Naba Ouendé* or *Naba Ouondé*, meaning "Sun Chief." This is a
794 trace of the sun cult, which is unusual in Black West Africa, all
opinions to the contrary notwithstanding. /590/ The majority of the Mossi sacrifice much more to ancestors and to the Earth than to Naba Ouondé, who is to them a somewhat remote god.

794 It must be added that Lieutenant Desplagnes found among the
782 Mossi an esoteric cult of the sun, moon, and fire, which is peculiar
to religious initiates (Ouango) whom we shall mention later.

"The Hougho-Ouango of the Mossi (among the Mossi, those priests reside in the villages of Boujema, Mani, Kondogho, Yolo, and Tio) sacrifice to the sun in order to bind it to the Earth. They do this morning and evening, sunrise and sunset, during the first week
of the winter season, and every six days in the morning at sunrise thereafter.
[778] They also go to altars made of three conical stones and offer sacrifices and libations, always surrounded by the populace, family heads, drummers, and familial masks (ouango).

794 "Those priests tend the sacred fire throughout the year in a
372 small, highly adorned recess dug into one of their house walls. At
783 the end of the rainy season they will use it to light the great purifying
bush fires.

794 "They perform sacrifices at every new moon, and they have
782 seven important feasts a year for their divinity. Finally, during
the solar festivities, they use a cow's tail to tie down the sun to the earth and to bind its life-giving heat." (*Le Plateau central nigérien* /The Central Nigerian Plateau/, pages 275 and 276.)

000 *nigérien* /The Central Nigerian Plateau/, pages 275 and 276.)

The Mossi sacrifice to evil spirits (*kinkirga* in the singular,
782 *kinkirsi* in the plural). In Mossi villages, when the cold weather begins,
776 the oldest man in the village performs a sacrifice to avert the
wrath of evil spirits. These are indeed fearsome, for among other
things they cause the storms, the fierce winds that lay flat the millet
and maize. Those spirits usually live in the bush and inhabit
[824] in particular the *kankalra* trees (*lenga* in Mandé), to which the
Mossi offer sacrifices but whose leaves they nevertheless eat. There
are Mossi who can see the *kinkirsi* and who have fights with them.

791 Now, let us say a word about the priestly organization of the
Mossi.

/591/ First of all, among the Mossi as among other Blacks, there are soothsayers and makers of grigris. The soothsayers are called *bara* and the grigri makers *timisoba*, meaning "grigri chiefs," from *timi*, "grigri" and *soba*, "chief." This is exactly the same word formation as that of *basitigui* in Bambara.

Prior to the French occupation there were considerable numbers
of bara among the Mossi, at least one for every village. Since the
arrival of the Whites, however, they are much fewer. The *bara* disclose
[787] things with the aid of some earth. Since they only charge a
few cowries for a consultation, they till the soil during the winter
season and even work at a trade during the dry season, for example
at shoemaking or weaving. They teach the *bara's* calling to their
children.

791 The *timisoba*, although less numerous than the *bara*, do not make
789 a living by making grigris either. They, too, till the soil and work
at a trade. They only make grigris on order and do not make them
up in advance.

The *timisoba* goes into the bush and cuts out the roots of certain trees. He burns them and puts the charcoal in bags which he hangs either inside or outside his hut. This charcoal is or becomes grigri. In order to make other objects into grigris, he reduces the charcoal to powder, mixes it with *karité* butter, and marks with it all the objects he wishes to make into grigris, such as cow's tails, deer horns, sheep horns, etc. This charcoal powder is put to all sorts of uses. The *timisoba* even mixes it with his millet flour and eats it.

789 791 A number of grigris made by Mossi timisoba have passed through my hands. I shall list them and briefly describe them below.

1. A cow's tail at the tip of a wooden handle. When one is traveling during the winter season and a storm threatens, one need only wave the cow's tail and the storm does not burst. Once in the village, one stops waving it and the rain comes.

2. A hollow koba horn in which tamarind leaves, peanuts, and [757] gum have been placed. In case of headache one opens the horn by its small upper lid, takes /592/ a pinch of the mixture, and swallows it. Then one does this again and also rubs a little on the forehead.

3. A small hoe with a chicken's head fastened to the handle. When during a dance one wishes to silence a singer who has been singing too long in order to sing oneself, one grips the hoe and covers the chicken's mouth. The singer is silenced, and in addition one sings perfectly.

4. A small hoe covered with leopardskin at the bend. If one is [752] bitten by a snake, one cuts off a very small piece of the skin and puts it in a canari full of water. Then one rubs the bite with this water.

5. A deer horn with a fine red cord wrapped around it. Inside the horn there are tiégélara and karité seeds. The opening of the horn is closed with a wad of cotton.

If an enemy comes looking for a fight, one places some of the contents of the horn on a leather bracelet which is slipped on the left wrist. No harm can come to you, and the quarrel will immediately come to an end.

6. A deer horn containing crushed scorpions and pimento. If one wishes to become an indefatigable dancer, one need only rub one's back with the mixture.

7. Leather bracelets with powdered rice inside. People who wear one of those bracelets on the arm can be sure that the stick or sword which their enemy may attempt to use against them will break in his hands.

8. Iron bracelets covered with crocodile skin. Same purpose.

9. Cotton bracelets with honey and salt inside. If your wife [842] is sterile, it is sufficient to put the bracelet in water in order to make her fertile.

789 791 777 10. A deer horn covered with leather and containing millet and pounded-bean flour. On the outside there is a hooked piece of iron.

789 If someone tells you that you own many animals, or that they are
791 very handsome, this gives bad luck, as you know. So, to ward it off,
777 /593/ you grasp your grigri by slipping two fingers into the iron hook and two others into the curve of the horn, and then you hang it in your hut, or better still, you hang it from the neck of one of the threatened animals.

789 11. A small turtle completely enclosed in a small leather bag
791 along with a powdered aquatic leaf called *kouri*. If you have a
755 stomach-ache, you cover the flat side of the object with butter and rub your stomach with it.

789 12. A small piece of wood covered with lizardskin in the middle
791 and leather at the ends and prolonged at one end by an iron tip.
832 If one wishes for the favors of a woman who refuses to grant them, one comes near the cruel woman while gripping the grigri in the left fist, its tip pointing up. At the same time, one presses the woman's hand tightly with the right hand. This method of seduction is claimed to be infallible.

789 13. A *koba* horn covered with leather and prolonged at the broad
791 end with a chicken foot. Inside, the horn contains rice, salt, and
154 *soumbara*. If you were threatened by a spell performed against you, you would slip the horn upon your head, with the thick end between the eyes and the pointed end behind the head. Then you would have nothing to fear.

14. A deer horn containing *barkoundi* leaves and closed with a lid adorned with a cowrie.

To prevent a sorcerer from eating the soul of a third party, you lift the lid with the aid of a knife covered with *karité* butter, you take with this knife a little of the contents of the horn, and you spread it on your forehead.

535 In addition to the *bara* and *timisoba*, the Mossi also have *ouango*.
532 "The *ouango*," says Marc (*op. cit.*, pages 152 and 155), "are
575 dancers whose costume consists of a huge liana robe which covers the entire body and which is surmounted by a wooden mask painted red and black and usually representing /594/ the head of an animal. The *ouango* are members of a rather mysterious brotherhood. They have a special language, and the Mossi believe that anyone who says a word

535 while the *ouango* are singing will surely die within the year. (The
532 ouango sing at the funeral ceremonies of important personages, at the
575 second ceremony performed a month or a year after the burial).
The masks of the *ouango* are made in the greatest secrecy. They have to be carved out of a single piece of wood, and the man who is making one must not be seen as long as his task has not been completed.

535 "In our opinion it would be most interesting to try and study
575 the *ouango* and their customs more closely than we succeeded in
171 doing. We believe, indeed, that theirs is a very old institution
174 antedating the arrival of the Mossi in the Volta basin, an institution which they found among the peoples they conquered and which they preserved, no doubt because they did not dare fight it. *Ouango* are to be found throughout Gourounsi territory, and the *dou* noticed by Binger among the Bobo would seem to have the same origin. The dancers with totemic masks who appear in some of Desplagnes' photographs are quite similar to the Mossi *ouango*."

The Mossi *ouango* are thus no different from the Bobo *dou*, the Khassonké *mamadiombo*, the Habé and Bambara *namakoro*, the Malinké *dokho*, the Landouman /Landuma/ *simo*, etc.

793 The Earth chief or Tensoba is also part of the Mossi priestly
174 organization. We are already familiar with Earth chiefs, whom we encountered among the Gourounsi. They exercise no political authority in the village, but they are entrusted with the performance of sacrifices to the Earth and to other local divinities.

The presence of those Earth chiefs among the Mossi is no doubt to be explained by the superposition of the conquering group over the conquered group. When the Mossi invaded and conquered the country, they placed their own men at the head of all the villages and all the cantons in the course of conquest, /595/ to ensure the submission of the vanquished population. They never felt, however, (and they hold this in common with the rest of West Africa) that they were themselves qualified to offer sacrifices to the Earth and other divinities of the place. Only the vanquished, former owners of the latter and on good terms with it, were qualified to do this. The former autochtonous political chief thus naturally became a religious chief under Mossi authority. We have already seen that the Moro Naba

793 never offers sacrifices himself to the Earth at Ouagadougou, nor does
174 he have them offered by the Gandé Naba, his minister of religion.
He entrusts with this task the Ouagadougou Naba, who is a grandson of the autochtonous inhabitants and thus favorably regarded by the local divinities. Similarly, when the Moro Naba sacrifices to the hillocks surrounding Ouagadougou, he entrusts the local chief with the offerings and the physical sacrifice. Now, what the Moro Naba still does at Ouagadougou was no doubt done by other Mossi chiefs throughout the land after conquest, once the submission of the autochtonous inhabitants had been ensured by force of arms. Hence, the institution of the Tensoba.

One might object that Earth chiefs are also to be found in Gourounsi territory, although the Gourounsi are independent. We know, however, that the present-day Gourounsi cantons were not the achievement of the Gourounsi themselves but of minor Mossi dynasties established in the territory. Under the circumstances, the same substitution of conquering chiefs for conquered chiefs has occurred there as in Mossi territory, with the same consequences.

793 "The Tensoba," says Marc, p. 157, "whose title means 'Master of the Earth,' stands in opposition to the naba who is a military chief....

"The Tensoba is the indispensable mediator between the ancestors and their living descendants. It is he who conducts the funeral ceremonies and who decides on the honors to be rendered on the Day of the Dead. It is to him that one appeals in case of an epidemic or any public misfortune, since misfortunes are always due to the evil inclinations of ancestors that must be allayed."

/596/ Actually, the institution of the Earth chief does not strip
793 the village and canton chiefs of all religious powers. In some areas,
643 as Marc pointed out, the Earth chiefs have gradually vanished, and
839 the political chiefs have become religious chiefs as well. They perform
778 sacrifices on the *bara*'s advice, without failing to make a gift
[431] of some sort (100 or 1,000 cowries) to the latter also. By the same
token and up to a point, the Moro Naba is invested with a religious character and with religious attributes. It is he, as we have already seen, who orders the performance of sacrifices to the Earth, to the hills. Every year during the dry season, he has a donkey sacrificed to Naba Koutou, a former Moro Naba, in the hut where the latter is buried. Prior to our occupation it was a eunuch who performed

793 the sacrifice and killed the donkey. He also slit the throat of a
643 horse, a beef, and a sheep. (This eunuch in charge of guarding the
839 tomb was called by the name of Naba Koutou, and in a way per-
778 petuated the deceased Moro Naba. He was granted special privi-
leges. If a man who was condemned to death ran away and reached
the tomb, he was safe but became the eunuch's slave. Similarly,
[567] a captive who ran away from his master gained his freedom from the
latter if he reached the grave, but became the slave of Naba Koutou.
Finally, at that time, it was forbidden to ride by the hut on a donkey.
Naba Koutou would seize the donkey, or at least demand a ransom
in cowries before returning it. This applied to any animals who ran
astray near the tomb. The tomb still exists nowadays, along with
the Naba Koutou who watches over it, but the latter no longer enjoys
the same privileges.)

793 We saw earlier that the Moro Naba had a sort of minister of the
645 cult in the person of the Gandé Naba, high priest and sacrificer.
There was also the Pouy Naba, or chief of the fetisheers, whose
function was probably to mediate between the Mossi bara and
timisoba as a whole and the central authorities.

782 Let us close this study of Mossi religion, which incidentally is
quite incomplete and a mere outline, with a few words on the human
sacrifices that were performed /597/ in the territory prior to our
occupation, and a few words on circumcision as well.

782 "Human sacrifices," says Marc., p. 156, "definitely took place
766 among the Mossi up to the time when we occupied the territory.
Whenever a Moro Naba died at Ouagadougou, one of his wives and
one of his horses were sent to Gambaga in order to be sacrificed on
the tomb of Ouidiraogo (?) who is regarded as the mother of the first
Moro Naba. Soon after the occupation of Ouagadougou by the French,
782 the dethroned Moro Naba, Boukary Koutou, ordered the sacrifice of a
754 black rooster, a black goat, a black donkey, a black beef, and a
black slave on one of the mountains overlooking the White Volta.
This, it seems, was bound to cause the immediate death of the new
Moro Naba enthroned by Voulet."

304 As for circumcision, the Mossi circumcise boys and excise girls.

Boys are circumcised when they are from eight to twelve years
old, and thirty or forty of them are circumcised at one time. The

304 occasion calls for festivities that last for one month, and it is repeated every seven or eight years in each village.

As for girls, they undergo the barbarous operation of excision when they are from eight to twelve years old. The girls' excision is not performed at the same time as the boys' circumcision, but in another year. The attendant festivities also last for one month.

The girls are operated on by a woman, the boys by a man.

It is not the labia of the girls that are severed, but the clitoris itself. Why do this? My informants did not know. Is it to make the weaker sex less susceptible to sensual pleasures? No. It would rather be, my informants tell me, to facilitate the physical union of men and women. This would also be the aim of the boys' circumcision. But my informants were not sure.

881 304 171 We might note that among the Mossi, as in certain other parts of West Africa, for example in Guinea (but not among the Gourounsi, where boys are not circumcised /598/ and girls are often excised at birth), circumcision and excision are combined with an initiation, that is to say, are closely connected with the education and instruction of young men and girls. One takes advantage of the circumcision or excision to complete, so to speak, the instruction and education of youth.

881 304 Marc has the following to say about the subject (op. cit., p. 150). "The circumcision of boys takes place around the age of twelve and occasions important festivities. There seems to be a sort of initiation ceremony, which is performed in rather mysterious circumstances. Unfortunately, it is difficult to find out exactly what does take place."

000 We close our survey of Mossi religion by referring the reader to Appendix 33 /not translated/ for a few complementary details on the Moslem question in the territory. We have also concluded our description of Mossi society as a whole. In order to gain a deeper understanding of its origins as far as the conquering population is concerned, we shall now have a glance at the Foutanké social type in the following chapter /not translated/.